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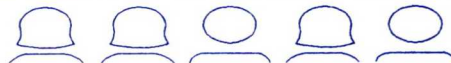
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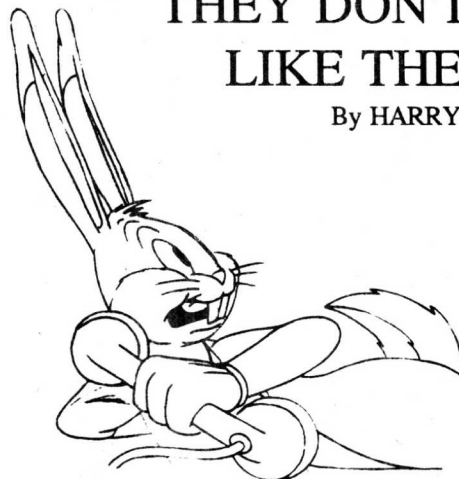
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ANIMATORIAL

One of the nice things about the art of animation, and something that sets it apart from most popular media, is its timelessness. The Warner Bros. characters whom we focus on in this issue of *Animato* have been around for decades; while the songs, live-action films, and other products of the time have become period pieces, Bugs and Daffy have remained ever-young and popular.

What makes the Warner cartoons, and other great animation, so timeless? Why has relatively little of the animation produced in this country in the last two or three decades shared that quality? There are countless answers to those questions, but I suspect one of the reasons has to do with the special strengths of the theatrical cartoon short as a format for animation.

The Disney studio's unique place in animation history as a center of experimentation and growth is oft-celebrated;



the excellence of Warner, MGM, and other animation producers as studios in the artistic, pre-Hollywood sense of the word rather less so. What the directors of the golden age had (the ability to make several short animated films a year, with adequate budgets, staffs, and deadlines) and what was required of them (simply to make the cartoons funny) was priceless.

Illustration copyright (c) 1989 Warner Communications, Inc.

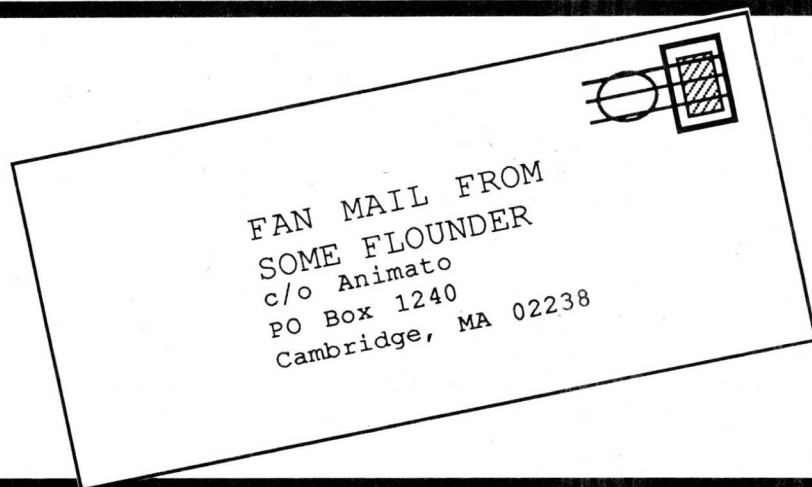
THEY DON'T MAKE THEM LIKE THEY USED TO

By HARRY MCCRACKEN

Chuck Jones took as much advantage of the situation as anyone. He made one-shots, like *One Froggy Evening*, and felt no obligation to turn them into series. He used characters like Hubie and Bertie and the Three Bears sparingly, resisting the temptation to run them into the ground. And when characters rich in possibility came along - Bugs, Daffy, Wile E. Coyote - he developed their personalities over the course of many years.

This room to experiment and refine was directly responsible for many of the great characters being able to reach their potential for greatness; the creation of Bugs Bunny is the classic example. The rabbit began as an unfunny one-shot character who little resembled his later self, then went through several distinct stages of development before reaching maturity.

(Continued on page 7)



sics version is McBadger simply answering the door to find Ratty and Mole taken aback by his anger. And no wonder. Without the previous sequence, McBadger's fury (not to mention his line of sight, over Mole and Ratty's heads) makes no sense.

Perhaps other purists can locate additional cuts. Perhaps Disney can offer an explanation.

FAN SEEKS UNCENSORED CARTOONS

Jonathan Sweeney
Andover, MA

I had read in volume 1, issue 4 of *Animation Magazine* that MGM/UA would be selling a tape of World War II cartoons including *Bugs Bunny Nips the Nips* and a Tex Avery tape including *The Blitz Wolf*. Can you tell me if any companies plan on releasing any World War II training cartoons? (I already have about ten Private Snafu cartoons, *The Spirit of '43*, and *Camouflage*.) Will anybody ever release *Coal Black and de Sebb*

MR. TOAD'S CREDITORS REPORTED MISSING

Alan Dean Foster
Prescott, AZ

Like the new, larger format. Better for the artwork and far more professional looking.

Purists should be forewarned that the Disney Mini-Classics tape of *Wind in the Willows* has at least two

brief sequences cut from the original. When the newspaper reports of Mr. Toad's trial are flashed on the screen, one or two of the originals are not included in the Mini-Classics version.

Of much more importance is the excision of the confrontation at the entrance to Toad Hall between the harried McBadger and Toad's angry creditors. What we have instead in the Mini-Class

ben Dwarfs? And will *Animato* reprint any back issues that are sold out? (To answer your last question first, there are no plans presently to reprint out-of-print issues of *Animato*. Public demand might possibly sway us, though, so those who want them can feel free to let their desire be known. (Yours is not the first query we've heard about the subject.)

As for your other questions, MGM/UA has recently released Tex Avery and wartime cartoon tapes, but they don't include the little-seen cartoons you mention. Given the radically different attitudes towards racial stereotypes that prevail today, we find it hard to believe that MGM/UA would make those cartoons or Coal Black available on tape. Your best bet to locate World War II-themed cartoons is probably the catalogues of videotapes that cater to collectors, some of which include cartoons which are otherwise unavailable. See "Toons on Tape" on page 18 for reviews of two such tapes.)

ROGER RABBIT A SPOOF, NOT A MYSTERY STORY

Donald Alan Webster
Hapeville, GA

It was most interesting to read Harry McCracken's review of *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* [*Animato* #17], but I think he has missed a rather obvious point. It is not a "a mystery story," it is a sendup of mystery stories. It is a parody, a spoof. The plot bears some (obviously not coincidental) resemblance to the plot of *Chinatown*. That the explanation to the title question is "obvious, confusing, and improbable" is intentional; it is a spoof of serious mystery stories where the solution was "obvious, confusing, and improbable." Indeed, Judge Doom was such an obvious villain that I doubt if anyone was intended to be surprised.

The list of cameos of noted toons was interesting, and included many I had not spotted. Of course, when they got to Toontown, things went by so fast, it was hard to spot all that was going on. I did notice a few not on your list: Bozo the Clown, the Dodo Bird (from *Porky in Wackyland*), Homer Pigeon, and Michigan J. Frog (from *One Froggy Evening*). I don't know how you managed to miss that last one. No doubt there were others I missed as well.

There were a number of anachronisms in *Roger Rabbit*. The penguin waiters from *Mary Poppins* should not have

been in Hollywood until the 1960s; the *Sleeping Beauty* goons would not have been around that early, either. A friend of mine says that the inclusion of the Road Runner and Wile E. Coyote is also an anachronism, but it is possible that they may have been in Hollywood for a year or two looking for work before Warner hired them. This past Summer at the Atlanta Fantasy Fair, the Canadian animator Peter Adamkos pointed out that the Goofy cartoon *Roger Rabbit* watches was released a year after the events of the film were taking place. (We noticed the frog who hopped up the steps of the Maroon Cartoon studio, but decided after thinking it over that he probably wasn't Michigan J., because of his derby and other visual differences from the legendary Chuck Jones character. Similarly, the Bozo-like clown seemed to us to be one of several made-of-whole-cloth characters who appeared in crowd scenes.)

JAPANIMATION DEBATE CONTINUES

Mark Dmuchowski
Sarasota, FL

Like a reader of yours whose letter was printed in the latest issue of *Animato*, Gary Weir, I'd like to see more articles on Japanese animation, or at least more space of some kind devoted to it. For too long, I've read articles exalting the brilliance of this American animator or that British director, without a mention of any of Japan's top animators and directors. I hope the influx of Japanese comics into America will make it easier for Japanese animation to get a fair shake both on TV and in the theaters.

Bob Miller's article on *Disney's Adventures of the Gummi Bears* was especially appreciated! Now I know that someone feels the way I do - that it's a damn fine show, both artistically and storywise. The jokes are great, and the production is topnotch. It's been one of my favorite Saturday-morning shows since it premiered. I hope that Disney will eventually syndicate it so it can compete with other daily offerings. (*Gummi Bears* is presently being offered to local TV stations for airing beginning in Fall 1990; the package will include both network reruns and made-for-syndication episodes. Japanese animation fans should check out Bob Miller's article in this issue's "Praxiscope" for some good news about a new company that will be bringing Japanese films to American audiences.)

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PRAXINOSCOPE

The World of Animation

ON THE DRAWING BOARD

Below, a hardly all-inclusive list of notable upcoming animation releases for theaters, television, and videotape.

All Dogs Go to Heaven

Also known as *Charlie, the Heavenly Dog*, Don Bluth's newest film (this time without the collaboration of Steven Spielberg) is scheduled for release some time this year. Voices include Burt Reynolds and the omnipresent Dom DeLuise.

Babar: the Movie

Jean de Brunhoff's kingly elephant will appear in a Nelvana animated feature directed by Alan Bunce. His Royal Highness reaches theaters in July.

Bambi

The young prince becomes the newest star of the "Disney Classics" videotape line when the classic 1942 film is released on tape in November.

Bullwinkle

Jay Ward's classic show makes its long, long-overdue appearance on (legitimate) videotape later this year. To be released by Disney, of all people.

Chip 'n Dale's Rescue Rangers

Disney's chipmunks will muscle in on the territory of Alvin, Simon and Theodore in both a syndicated series this Fall (currently being previewed on The Disney Channel) and an original theatrical film to be released in February 1990.

DuckTales

The latest exotic locale visited by Uncle Scrooge and the nephews will be the big screen, in the first of a series of original TV-style theatrical animated features from Disney.

Chip 'n Dale's Rescue Rangers.
Copyright (c) 1989 The Walt Disney Company.



shortly before his death. Scheduled for release at Christmas (the sequel is already in the works).

The Little Mermaid

Look for Disney's next feature to be hyped as its first fairy tale since *Sleeping Beauty* when it premieres this Thanksgiving. Directed by John Musker and Ron Clements; score by Howard Ashman.

The Rescuers Down Under

Disney feature-length animation's first sequel (since *The Three Caballeros*, anyway): the further adventures of Miss Bianca and Bernard. Directed by Hendel Butoy and Mike Gabriel; scheduled for 1990.

Rollercoaster Rabbit

The first of a planned series of real Roger Rabbit cartoons hits the theaters (Continued on page 7)

Jetsons: the Movie

What was planned as a live-action feature turned into an animated one somewhere along the way; George O'Hanlon completed his role as George Jetson



Cartoon by Stu Schiffman

THE FLYING MOUSE: A DISNEY ABERRATION?

By Mark Mayerson

The Disney Silly Symphony *The Flying Mouse* (1934) has been discussed by several commentators. In *Of Mice and Magic*, Leonard Maltin discusses the color styling of the film. In *Disney Animation: The Illusion of Life*, Thomas and Johnston write about the advances made in character animation. So far, the film's most interesting point has escaped discussion. Thematically, this film is opposite to much of the Disney studio's work.

We are all familiar with the Disney attitude that dreams can come true. In *Pinocchio* (1939), Jiminy Cricket sings that "when you wish upon a star your dreams come true." In *Cinderella* (1950), a song proclaims that "a dream is a wish your heart makes." In these films, the characters' dreams come true, and they are better off for it. In *The Flying Mouse*, the title character's dream comes true, but it results in a nightmare.

A little boy mouse watches birds fly and yearns for wings himself. He imagines himself the focus of the birds' adulation for his graceful flying skills. When he saves a butterfly from a spider,

From *The Flying Mouse*. Illustration copyright (c) 1989 The Walt Disney Company.



he discovers that the butterfly is really a fairy. She offers to reward him and he requests a pair of wings. The fairy complies, but warns him that "a mouse was never meant to fly."

He joins the birds' airshow, and ends his display by applauding himself. The birds are scared of him and fly away.

EXTRA! EXTRA! ANIMATO ERRS!

Everybody knows that *Animato* never makes mistakes, right? Well, no. Being human, we do. Readers of Jim Korkis's "Harlequin" column in the last issue may have been startled to note that it credited Walt Disney with doing some animation in *Pinocchio*. He didn't, of course; Walt Kelly was the Walt in question, as was reasonably clear from the context. (The mistake was your editor's, not Jim's.)

In the Jack Hannah interview in the same issue, Hannah says he thinks he didn't direct any Charlie Beary cartoons while at the Lantz studio. Mark Mayerson points out that Hannah did direct one: *Fowled-Up Birthday* (1962).

As long as we're clearing up errata from past issues, Bob Miller has asked

us to publish a few corrections to "My Youth in Cartoonia," his article on Hanna-Barbera that we published in issues #15 and #16. *Loopy de Loop* premiered in September, 1987 on the USA Network, along with segments of *Magilla Gorilla*, *Quick Draw McGraw*, and *Wally Gator*. The "Invisible Monster in *Jonny Quest* threatened *Hadji*, not Jonny, when the rocket belt failed to function. The character Ted Cassidy voiced in *The Fantastic Four* was Galactus, not "Galacticus" (our typo, not Bob's). Finally, in *The Funky Phantom*, Micky Dolenz voiced Skip, and Tommy Cook played Augie.

We don't plan on making any mistakes in this issue, or future ones, but please, if you note any, let us know.

When he flies over his house to impress his mother, brothers and sister, the shadow he casts on the ground terrifies them. They run into the house and refuse to let him in. The mouse takes refuge in a cave, where he meets some bats who call him brother. The mouse denies it. The bats declare that no mouse ever had wings, and if he's not a mouse and not a bat, he's a nothing.

The mouse flees and tries to tear off his wings. He is unable to, and breaks down and cries. One of his tears turns into the fairy and she fulfills his wish to return to his former state. She counsels him to be happy being himself and then vanishes. The mouse returns home and his family eagerly embraces him.

Dumbo (1941) takes the idea of a "wrong" animal being able to fly and treats it as a triumph. That's the kind of Disney attitude we would expect. *The Flying Mouse* is a deeply conservative film, implying a sort of class consciousness. It seems to say that you should be happy with whatever life has dealt you. You shouldn't dream of anything out of the ordinary, because it will make you different than the rest of your kind and you will be ostracized. With this kind of reasoning, *Dumbo* would have ended with the elephant having normally-sized ears.

I would love to know who within the studio was responsible for the story development on this project and whether this theme is echoed in any of their other work. It certainly seems to run counter to the studio's usual attitudes. I wonder what Walt Disney's own attitudes towards this story were.

This film was in production at around the time that Disney decided to do *Snow White*. Does this film represent Disney's doubts about trying to make cartoons more than just mice? Is this film Disney's nightmare of failure? Disney was about to push animation into areas it had never been, and about to push himself from being a shorts producer to a feature producer. Was he afraid that the film industry and the public wouldn't accept him in the new role, and that he'd be sorry he attempted it? Does *The Flying Mouse* represent the part of Disney that wanted to play it safe and stay with what he was familiar with?

Somewhere in the Disney Archives are the story credits for this film and the notes from the story conferences. Maybe they'll supply some clues as to what made *The Flying Mouse* such an unusual Disney cartoon.

STREAMLINE PICTURES:

BRINGING JAPANIMATION STATESIDE

By Bob Miller

For years, Americans could only see Japanese animation at science fiction conventions or at club gatherings, where fuzzy second-generation videotape copies would play on TV screens in a language unfamiliar to most viewers. Those cartoons dubbed into English usually had their storylines substantially altered by American distributors, who also edited out scenes depicting mature subject matter such as sex and violence.

Now Streamline Pictures, a new distribution company, has been formed to bring the finest Japanese animation to this country. Features will be presented on big movie screens as they were meant to be shown, and translated into English while remaining true to the originals.

"What we hope to do is really start a sensation," says Jerry Beck, Streamline's cofounder and president of distribution. "The general public is not aware of these kinds of films. And we think that a lot of people are going to discover a whole new world of what can be done in the world of animation with these films."

Beck has been involved with film distribution for many years, with Orion Classics and MGM/UA, and with Expanded Entertainment (the company that distributes the *Tournees of Animation*, the *Festival of Claymation*, and other compilations). He's written numerous articles on animation for magazines including *Animato*, and with Will Friedwald has co-authored the Warner Bros. cartoon reference book *Looney Tunes and Merrie Melodies: a Complete Illustrated Guide to the Warner Brothers Cartoons*.

"I believe in all different styles of animation," Jerry Beck says. "I'm not going to say that Japanese animation is better than American animation. I think anyone who says that is wrong. I think anyone who says that is ignorant of what's going on in the world of animation."

"But the Japanese offer an alternative. They make films that are dramatic, that are adult, that tackle subject matter that they just don't tackle in this country. In

America, the corporate-mentality thinking of the movie companies that produce animation is to make musical comedies about talking animals.

"I don't care if it's the greatest cartoons ever made, like the Warner Bros. cartoons; we're in trouble if animation's just pigeonholed as funny animals. Take Disney as the god of animation. He never did that. He had funny cartoons with Mickey Mouse; he had dramatic cartoons like *The Old Mill*; and he did experiments like *Fantasia*, full-length features that were fairy talks like *Snow White*, and realistic nature dramas like *Bambi*. Diversification like that proves you can tell all sorts of stories in animation."

"The Japanese have taken animation in directions that the animation film directors in America are afraid to go into and haven't gone into," Beck says. "They're doing all sorts of things, from children's stories to adult drama. That's the way animation should be."

"They're doing basically what we're importing; well-done, mature fantasy films. They would be rated 'PG' or 'R' for the most part. Things happen in these films that would cost a fortune to be produced in live-action. There's definitely a place for these kinds of movies."

By working as a "middle man," Streamline will be servicing several groups of people: fans interested in high-quality animation; Japanese animators who want their work released in the United States, presented properly on the movie screen; and theaters looking for innovative, off-beat movies that don't usually play at mall cinemas.

To address the fans, Beck says, "We're going to be tying in with a lot of comic-book conventions. We're taking out ads, and we're going to tie into local comic book stores. We want to get the word out that these films are coming out in the theater."

The first Streamline release is Hayao Miyazaki's *Laputa: the Castle in the Sky*. The story involves a boy and a girl outwitting government agents and air pirates, while searching for a myster-

ious flying castle. *Laputa* will be released to selected cities beginning this Spring. Streamline will also show an unusual film called *Twilight of the Cockroaches* during that time. *Twilight* is a mix of live-action and animation, about cockroaches battling humans - from the cockroaches' point of view.

While *Laputa* has already been dubbed by the Japanese, Streamline will be dubbing its future releases. In rare cases, films such as *Twilight of the Cockroaches* will be subtitled. Currently, Streamline is negotiating for the rights to show *Fist of the North Star*, *Lensman*, and *Akira*, which it hopes to release this year, with more movies to follow the next year.

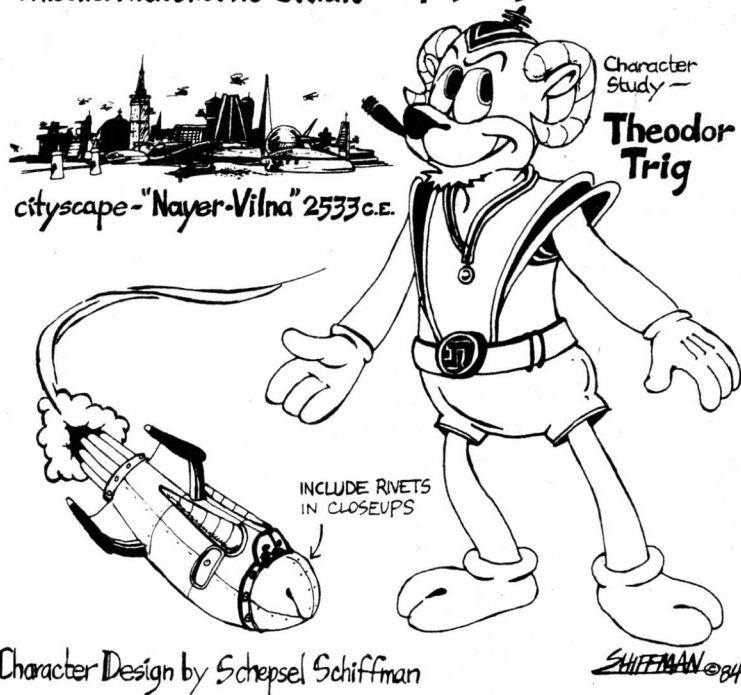
Jerry Beck believes the time is right for Japanese animated films in this country, with 1989 shaping up as the year of the fantasy hero: with Batman, Indiana Jones, *Ghostbusters*, *Star Trek*, and others.

Says Beck, "We're competing against it on the one hand, and on the other hand we're not, because we're not going head-to-head with multi-million-dollar productions and giant advertising budgets and opening in one thousand theaters on Friday afternoon. We're playing to art theaters, which are not the same theaters that will be playing these other movies. And we're going after a different audience. The thing is, we're hoping to profit by their success. And there's certainly enough money to go around for all these films."

"Our company is a very small company. We do not anticipate being in the same league as Paramount Pictures and their Indiana Jones. There's just no way. These (Japanese animation) films *should* be distributed by those companies and given the grand-scale treatment. But they're not."

"We're here to hopefully get the ball rolling, to hopefully start an explosion of Japanese animation awareness in this country. What's really going on here is there is high-quality work that's being done, excellent films being made, and there's an audience for it in this country. That's what we're about."

Model sheet - Yiddish "Tzukunfft • Mishegoss"
language cartoon (1932)
-Mischel Mauskovits Studio-



ANIMATORIAL

(Continued from page 2)

ity in *A Wild Hare* (1940). There hasn't been a real place for cartoon characters to develop in this way since the death of the Hollywood short, which goes a long way towards explaining why so few memorable ones have emerged.

At first glance, the animated television series seems to offer a lot of the potential that the theatrical cartoon had for this kind of experimentation, but it hasn't often worked out that way. Have Fred Flintstone, Scooby-Doo, and Fat Albert grown as characters over the many years they've been around? Not really. (To be fair, theatrical characters like Heckle and Jeckle never demonstrated much personality development, either.)

There is at least a little reason for optimism. *Mighty Mouse: the New Adventures* has exhibited some of the creative impulses of the classic theatrical shorts; see *Animato* #16 for former Senior Director John Kricfalusi's explanation of how he modeled the staff's organization after the old Hollywood studios. And the theatrical animated short itself, gone for so many years, is staging a quiet comeback: Warner Bros. released two new Daffy Duck shorts last year, though not widely, and Disney is

currently producing new *Roger Rabbit* cartoons and featurettes starring Mickey and Donald and the gang. It's encouraging to see these studios making this tentative, small-scale return to the form; let's hope it's successful enough to warrant more.

On an entirely different subject, this issue of *Animato* would not be complete without some mention of this year's Academy Award for best animated short. No, we don't take the Oscars themselves that seriously, but the awarding of one to a film animated by computer - John Lasseter's *Tin Toy* - is a truly significant event. Computer animators long ago proved themselves capable of producing snazzy TV sports titles, and more recently have made some pretty impressive commercials. But *Tin Toy*'s Oscar marks the computer's coming of age as a tool for real storytelling and character animation.

Finally, an invitation. Would you like to share your opinion of recent animated films and TV shows? Why not send us a paragraph or two on them for our letters section? It's an easy and fun way to make your voice heard among a lot of enthusiastic animation fans. You might even start a controversy.

CONTRIBUTORS' NOTES

David Bastian is a New York-based animator and teacher. Timothy Fay is a freelance writer and cartoonist, currently working on his bachelor's degree in computer science at the University of Minnesota. Jim Korkis has contributed to just about every animation and comics magazine you can think of, and is co-editor of *Cartoon Quarterly*. Matthew Hasson, one of *Animato*'s most prolific writers, has contributed something to almost every issue since #5. Mark Mayerson is an animator with Side Effects, a Toronto-based computer graphics company. Bob Miller is a frequent contributor to *Animato* who has also written for *Starlog* and *Comics Scene*. Stu Schiffman is the writer and artist of *Sax and Violet*, the back-up feature in the comic book *Captain Confederacy*. Steve Segal is a Hollywood-based animator, presently with American Interactive Media.

ABOUT THE COVER

This issue's cover (artist unknown, unfortunately) celebrates this issue's Friz Freleng interview and focus on Warner Bros. cartoons by reprinting the illustration portion of the title card prepared to advertise Freleng's 1946 cartoon *Hollywood Daffy*. Illustration copyright (c) 1989 Warner Communications, Inc.

DRAWING BOARD

(Continued from page 4)

this Summer. (See "A Little Birdie Told Me," page 40.)

Tale Spin

It's a spinoff of *DuckTales* - get it? *The Jungle Book*'s Baloo and King Louie go syndicated beginning Fall 1990. (See "A Little Birdie Told Me," page 40.)

Tiny Tunes

Steven Spielberg brings us pint-sized relatives of the Warner Bros. characters in this new syndicated series, starting Fall 1990. (See "A Little Birdie Told Me," page 40.)

Who Framed Roger Rabbit

You'll finally be able to spot every animated cameo and in-joke when last year's biggest theatrical hit makes its videotape debut in October.

AN INTERVIEW WITH

FRIZ FRELENG

BY JERRY BECK

In the course of researching my new, completely rewritten Warner Bros. cartoon filmography Looney Tunes and Merrie Melodies: a Complete Illustrated Guide to the Warner Bros. Cartoons (Henry Holt Publishers) with Will Friedwald, I had the pleasure of meeting one of the legendary figures in Warner cartoon history, Friz Freleng.

Friz has retired from active cartoon production, but he remains quite active in the animation field. An arrangement with Circle Galleries has him touring the country promoting limited-edition cels, and he has just been signed as a consultant, along with Chuck Jones, to Steven Spielberg's new Warner series Tiny Tunes.

I met Friz Freleng as his guest at the Friars Club in Beverly Hills on August 22nd, 1988. With his permission, I recorded our lunchtime chat; Harry McCracken transcribed and edited this informal interview for publication.

Jerry Beck

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BECK: *You started in Kansas City with Disney, right?*

FRELENG: Disney wasn't at United Film Ad Service when I was there, but he had just left. See, I base half or almost all of my whole career on destiny, where something's guiding me besides myself.

When I had just graduated from high school, I was looking for a job, and there was an ad in a Kansas City paper for an office boy that could draw. So I put a bunch of drawings together, and headed downtown to Film Ad to apply for that job. But I got to the door and said, "Oh, I don't want to show this stuff." I was embarrassed by it. So I turned around and went home, didn't even apply.

My mother said, "Did you get the job?" And I said, "No, it was already taken." And about two weeks later that same ad appeared, and this time I got up the nerve to go in and ask for the job, and they said "It's yours." \$27.50 a week, which was a lot of money.

Walt had gone, and Ub Iwerks was ready to leave.

Was Walt well known at that time in Kansas City?

He had worked for Film Ad, but nobody had ever heard of him. As history shows, he tried to do some films there. So did Hugh Harman and Rudy Ising. They tried to do some local films, but it didn't work.

I told them I didn't know anything about animation. I used to watch Terrytoons, but I didn't know how they got them on the screen and really didn't give it any thought. Any more than people think today about how a picture gets on a television tube. They just accept it, and so did I.

So they said, "Well, we'll teach you." The only ones there were Hugh Harman, and Ub, who was ready to leave. There was a fellow by the name of Ben Hardaway working there, and Tubby Millar was working there. They were writers who wrote ads. They came after I did.

Hugh Harman had the patience to sit down and give me an idea how they did it. And then Ub left, and Hugh was ready to go, too. After Hugh left, I was left alone. They got Ben Hardaway trying to do some animation too, which he didn't want to do, 'cause he didn't know anything about it. But once in a while when they were just overloaded, he did some.



No, I did not. See when I came to work for Walt, I couldn't get along with him. He had to have a whipping boy, and I guess I was the guy. There was a little guy by the name of Ham Hamilton who worked for him before, and Walt made life so miserable for him that Ham quit. I didn't know I was taking Ham's job, or I probably wouldn't have. If I had known Ham at that time, I would never have taken it, because I loved the guy.

So I didn't get along with Walt, and I quit and went back to Kansas City and worked for Film Ad again. And I corresponded with Hugh Harman, and he said everybody was leaving Walt. Hugh, and Rudy [Ising]...

That was when they signed that contract with Mintz [to do Oswald cartoons]?

Yes. And then Ub left also, and started his own studio. And that's all history, as you probably know already.

Then I came out here and worked for Charlie Mintz, who was really a nut. [Laughs] And Walt Lantz was working for him, too. Right in the middle of everything, it seemed like, Universal took it away from Charles Mintz, and gave it to Lantz. So Hugh, Rudy, myself, and Hamilton did a film with sound - *Bosko the Talk-Ink Kid*.

I stayed with Hugh and Rudy through the start of the Schlesinger era. When we lost the contract with Schlesinger, we were doing work for Van Beuren, farm-out work. I stayed with Hugh, but I thought he was going nowhere. Not that I could see the future.

When Leon Schlesinger tempted me away from Hugh and Rudy when they went to MGM, I had a guilt complex about it. Schlesinger sent Ray Katz over to see me, called me every once in a while, and tempted me to come over. He had hired a guy by the name of Tom Palmer, and Jack King, a couple of guys from Disney. Guys who were not making it.

Who was Earl Duval? He directed two cartoons and then disappeared, as far as I know.

He was a very lovable man, but a heavy drinker. And he did the best cartoons over there before I got there. And when I came over they let Tom Palmer go. Really, these were not writers. They were pretty good animators, but they weren't creative people.

I met Earl Duval at the drugstore for

After Hugh left, I said, "I don't know how to do this." And he said, "Get a book at the library called *Lutz's Book of Animation*." So I did, and that was acceptable to them. Everything was acceptable in those days, because the guys who hired us didn't know beans. They didn't know as much as we did, which was zero.

Then Walt started corresponding with me, asking me to come out. Hugh Harman had told him there was a guy out in Kansas City at Film Ad who looked like he had potential. And so Walt offered me fifty dollars a week to come out. I said I didn't know anything about animation, but was willing to learn.

When I told the people at United Film Ad service I was leaving, they said "Oh, no, we'd love to have you. We'll give you more money." They came up to \$47.50. So I hesitated to come out. I had never left home, so it was a big move for me. I figured if I didn't like California, or Walt didn't like what I did, what was I going to do? There was no place out here to work - everything was in New York at that time.

Funny thing about United Film Ad Service: they said, "Oh, we're going to raise you twenty dollars, but we can only give it to you a little at a time, because we've never given such raises

before." So one weekend they'd add five dollars, another they'd add five dollars, and by the time got to the \$47.50 I was ready to leave anyway. So I told Walt I was coming out, and I did come out.

Walt met me at a little old station near where the Union Station is now, the Santa Fe station. Walt had a roadster, and took me to the studio over on Hy-perion.

What were they working on then?

They were just finishing Alice and starting on Oswald. They put me to work next to Ub Iwerks, to animate.

You were friendly with them?

Oh, yeah. Well there were only four animators there. Hugh Harman was very nice to me. He's really the guy who guided me.

I owe everything to Hugh. I didn't know Hugh when I went to school, but I knew his name. I used to see his drawings and his name, but I never met him. He drew a lot like John Held, Jr. at that time. Hugh seemed to be restricted in what he did. He was an imitator.

Did you remain in touch with Disney and Iwerks throughout the years?



From Beauty and the Beast (1934).

breakfast one morning, and he was drunk already, and he said, "I'm going in and I'm going to tell Leon off a little bit. I'm going to get more goddamn money than he ever wanted to put out."

And that was the last we saw of Earl Duval.

I kept warning him. I said, "Don't do it now. Wait until some other day when you're sober." He said, "I'm sober now." And he walked away down the driveway.

By the time I finished breakfast and came down the driveway, here comes Earl Duval back. He said, "I got fired." He was a bad influence in a way, because of his attitude.

I also noticed one or two cartoons that said that they were directed by Bernard Brown.

That was just pure policy. He was a sound man. I don't think Leon even knew what a director did.

So anyhow, they let Palmer go, and I took all the drawings that he had made. Warner would not accept their cartoons, and Leon thought he was going out of business. He said, "I've got everything I've made in my lifetime dumped into this thing." So I took a lot of the drawings, and I retimed them, threw out a lot...

These would be those first cartoons after Hugh and Rudy left, I guess?

Yes, they came up with a character called Buddy.

Buddy seems like a character they came up with out of desperation because they didn't have Bosko. It's just a little boy, and that's all it is. There's nothing more to it.

Yes, a complete lack of character. But that's the character they had, and I think I made a couple of them, and Earl Duval made a couple. And there was one called *Honeymoon Hotel* that he did, that I thought was pretty good.

I did a few black-and-white musicals. I was falling into the Silly Symphonies style that Walt Disney was doing, without a main character. Then, when Porky Pig came along, with his stuttering, he stood out.

When they started in with the Cinecolor, Leon had me doing the Mer-

rie Melodies. Since I was the senior animator, I was doing them. Then when Tex [Avery] came over, he locked onto the Porky Pig character.

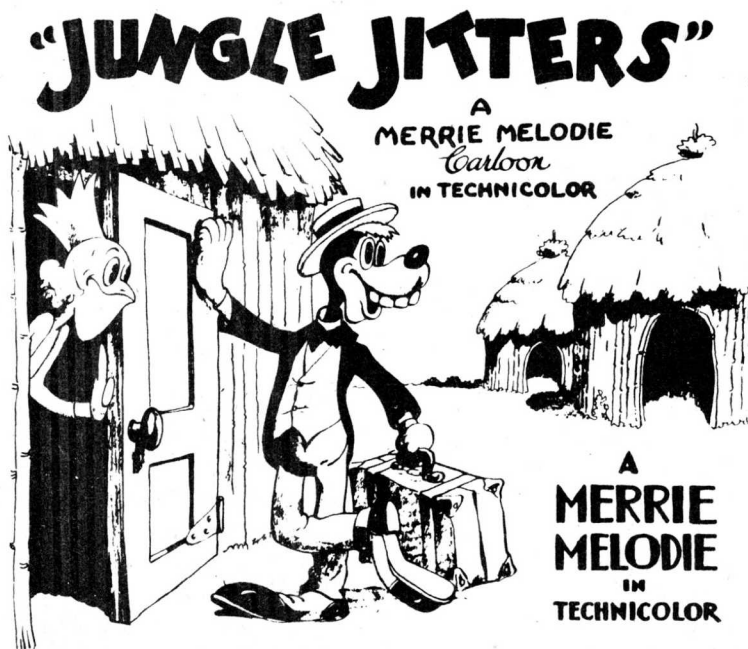
You left Warner Bros. and took Hugh Harman's place at MGM for a while.

Fred Quimby tempted me to come over. He offered me a lot of money; for me at that time, it was a *hell* of a lot of money. I signed up in August, and my contract was up in October with Schlesinger. And Leon was madder than hell. He said, "You didn't give me a chance to compete before you signed up with him."

When I got there, Fred Quimby said to me, "Do anything you want to do. What are you going to do?" And I said, "I don't know. If I had something in mind, I would be making it over at Schlesinger's." He said, "You're right. Well, you can do whatever you feel is right."

I jumped from \$250.00 a week to \$375.00 at MGM. I thought it was going to be the same as over at Warner's: everybody cooperating with each other, nobody undermining the other guy. If they did [at Warner's], I wasn't conscious of it. I think Leon depended on me, and no one dared try to undermine me.

So when I got over to MGM, there was conspiracy right away. Joe Barbera, Dan Gordon, George Gordon, all them were working trying to put the New York people in front of the California people. And then there was real turmoil, because everyone was clamoring for



position. I was so glad to get out of that place.

Did you last a year at MGM?

I was there about a year and a half. Then one day I came home so disgusted with the whole thing I told my wife, "You know what? I'm going to swallow my pride, and call Schlesinger and see if I can get my job back."

And you know, that very evening, the phone rang. It was Henry Binder [Schlesinger's assistant]. I laughed, because nobody ever called me before. He was laughing, and I was laughing. He says, "I hear you're unhappy over there." So they must have got it through the grapevine.

So to make a long story short, I went over and talked to Leon, and said, "I don't want any more money. I'll take the money that I had before. I just want to get out of there." And he was very happy to get me back, because he tried two or three other guys there. A fellow by the name of Norm McCabe, and Ben Hardaway... And they were all making cartoons that just didn't have it.

The cartoons never seemed to find the path, they kind of wandered about. There was no guide there. With Leon, it was like a ship without a captain. Everyone was going in different directions, and Leon just didn't seem to be able to handle that.

So I came back, and Tex started making better cartoons, and we all started imitating each other. We finally found a path.

There was that gag sensibility you got around 1940.

We finally found a direction. Clampett was very good at it.

What were your feelings about Tex Avery and Bob Clampett back then, and Chuck Jones even? What was your reaction to them as people?

I was so engrossed in what I was doing I didn't even care what the other guys were doing. You were always trying to do better than they were. Unconsciously, there was competition, naturally. We wanted to make the best pictures possible.

I think we all influenced each other. Without bragging, like where one guy thinks he created this and that. I don't think anybody created anything himself.

SHOW BIZ FRIZ: AN APPRECIATION

ONCE MORE, WITH FRELENG

Warner Bros. fans tend to take Friz Freleng for granted. The accomplishments of other major Warner directors are easier to pin down: it was Tex Avery who built the foundations of the Warner style, Bob Clampett who stretched it to its looniest extremes, and Chuck Jones who refined it to its most sophisticated state.

Freleng, by contrast, has merely spent six decades (off and on) as one of the studio's top talents, starting by animating *Bosko the Talk-in-Kid*, the first Warner cartoon, and continuing into the 1980s, during which he has directed three compilation features and served as a consultant to other studio works.* But to conclude that his cartoons are superbly-crafted entertainments (which they usually are), rather than lofty works of art or daring experiments is hardly to demean them; call him Harold Lloyd to Jones's Chaplin and Avery's Keaton.

Freleng made many of his best cartoons in the late 1940s and early 1950s, a period when Clampett, Avery, and Tashlin had left the studio, and he and Jones (and sometimes Bob McKimson) were polishing the Warner style into a more purely character-oriented, slightly gentler form. Like Lloyd's films, Freleng's cartoons derive much of their considerable appeal from their simple zeal and quick-wittedness; there's something marvelously *chipper* about his work. His Bugs Bunny is Bugs at his most energetically clever, and Freleng characters as disparate as Tweety, Yosemite Sam, and Speedy Gonzales share a likable wide-eyed alertness as a distinguishing characteristic.

Freleng's greatest strength as a director was the facility with which

he staged his material. Cartoons like *Rocketeer Rabbit* (1946), *High Diving Hare* (1949), and *Knighty Knight Bugs* (1958) are classic Freleng: streamlined, conflict comedies in which every gag is carried out in a way that's straightforward, efficient - and hard to find fault with. Several critics have remarked on Freleng's love of corny, vaudeville-type jokes; they're right, but there's a lot of subtlety beneath that broad humor. One of the highest compliments you can pay his cartoons is that the more carefully you watch them, the funnier they are. His use of facial expressions is a case in point: unlike Jones, he rarely calls attention to them or derives humor directly from them. But the expressions in Freleng's best films are always amusing, always appropriate, and always contributing to the quality of the cartoon's humor.

Freleng has voiced his disinterest in creating Avery-style departure from reality in his work, and this orientation shows up in numerous ways in his cartoons. It's easy to forget how many of his cartoons had unusual but well-realized settings, from the Lower East Side of *A Hare Grows in Manhattan* (1947) to the Revolutionary War of *Bunker Hill Bunny* (1950). Even when he followed Hollywood animation's rush into UPA-inspired stylization, his cartoons usually took place in three-dimensional sets, rather than against flat backdrops: the cottage in *Goldmouse and the Three Cats* (1960) is a very real, atmospheric place, down to the warped floorboards.

The conceit that cartoon characters are in reality hard-working, high-spirited entertainers, recently popularized by *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*, was used by Freleng in several cartoons, including *Curtain Razor* (1949), *Show Biz Bugs* (1957), and, most notably, *You Ought to be in Pictures* (1940). That's a nice way to look at Friz Freleng, too: like his characters, one of the most consummate entertainers in animation history.

Harry McCracken

*Which is not to say that Freleng was never a trend-setter: his music-themed cartoons, often written by Michael Maltese, were particularly influential; the Wagner sequence in *Herr Meets Hare* (1945) clearly inspired Jones's *What's Opera Doc*, and both Hanna and Barbera's *The Cat Concerto* and Jones's *Baton Bunny* owe much to *Rhapsody Rabbit* (1946).

I think they were all little pieces of somebody else. I'd see something that Clampett did and I liked. I did it maybe in a little different way than he did. I'd see something that Tex Avery did, that Disney did... You don't create these things all yourself. They build from other people.

It was a creative thing. The guy who had the greatest imagination in the whole business was Walt himself. When I saw *Snow White*, it was an entirely different concept than anyone had ever thought of, ever. The concept of animation, even. Nobody animated like that; nobody drew characters like that; nobody put personality like that into the characters. It came from him.

I'm sure it influenced our thinking, and everybody's thinking in animation. They're *still* trying to imitate that.

Let me ask you some little specific questions. What happened when Tex Avery left Warner Brothers? Was it over them cutting a gag in one of his Bugs Bunnys? Do you know anything about that?

I don't think so. I think Bobby [Clampett] and Tex were always seeking something else. Because nobody really knew what the future was, and everybody wanted to be his own producer. But they didn't know enough about making deals, and they never really got anything out of it.

I think it was *Speaking of Animals* that Tex was working on before. I think in his book [*Tex Avery: King of Cartoons*, by Joe Adamson] he mentions that he proposed it to Leon, and Leon turned it down. I never knew what was going on, really.

The reason he went over to MGM was when I came back he knew there was a spot open. And when asked me about it I said I left there because the politics were terrible. But MGM was the height of motion picture studios, and I said, "Tex, they'd love to have you there." I figured I'd warned him enough. He said, "You think so?" I said, "I know they'd be tickled to death to have someone like you."

Boom! He was over there, and he got the job. I didn't think he was going to go over there, because I told him about the problems I had. But I figured he must have figured, "Hell, that won't happen to me."

It happened to him. When he got over to MGM he was a very unhappy man,

because Bill and Joe took over. He was second banana, no matter what he did. He tried *desperately*. I look at his cartoons and see elements of desperation.

He was afraid to do subtle things. Tom and Jerry had that. They had little personalities, and subtleties, and things like that.

Of course they had the broad gags - they were stealing part of Tex's stuff, the broad stuff.

There was a cartoon about two or three years later, that you made about a spider, called Meatless Flyday.

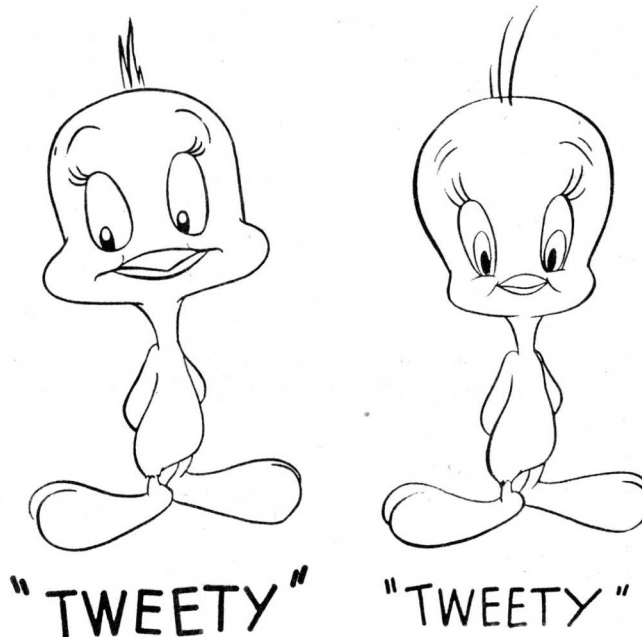
Oh, it was terrible.

Well, I like that cartoon. And you used Tex's voice as the spider - did you say come over and do this for me, or something?

Yeah. I also had him do a character where he was supposed to sing in rhythm, and he just couldn't get the rhythm. I remember we put him in one of these booths you record in, and shook the booth, and said "Just sing to that rhythm." But he couldn't do it. He just never had a sense of rhythm.

He was a fun guy to work with. Everybody liked Tex, but Tex was so insecure. I felt about his cartoons that he overdid them because he was so insecure about them. He couldn't do a subtle cartoon. If he did something, it had to be twice as strong as anybody else, because he was insecure about what he was doing.

Variations on a canary: an early drawing of Tweety, and a later, more familiar rendition.



It seemed like he never came up with a strong personality after he left Warner's. Tex was so anxious to please he was overdoing everything. He should have come up with characters like Bugs Bunny, things like that...

But I think he created a kind of contemporary art with that desperation, when you look back. His stuff was nothing I admired.

What's great is that your stuff and Tex's stuff is different. It's different, and yet they're both funny, and they both use the cartoon medium to its potential.

Well, you put your own personality in. Tex was a very introverted man. I think he had real family problems. You didn't know Tex; I never knew him outside of his outer skin.

To start with, I never mixed with the guys at the studio socially. I had my wife, and my family, and my sisters and brothers, and my wife's sisters and brothers. We socialized with our family, and we never socialized with these people. A lot of them were drinking people, and we never drank.

Let me ask you a question. In your family, back in the forties, what was the reaction to your directing those cartoons? Was it any big deal? Did they not care?

My eldest daughter, right now, will

"The TRIAL of MR. WOLF"



admit that when she went to school she was embarrassed to tell people that her father made Bugs Bunny. Because when she was growing up her two front teeth came in big, and they teased her, "I know where your daddy got the idea for Bugs Bunny." So she wouldn't tell anybody.

Last night, we were over at my youngest daughter's house. Her daughter, that's my granddaughter, her friend calls her up and says, "Your grandfather's on television now, on *Entertainment Tonight*. They showed his picture and announced his birthday." 'Cause within the family we don't think about it. It's like seeing Milton Berle every day. He's just another guy.

My kids never bragged about it. They said, "Well, we won't tell anybody, they'll think we're bragging."

Was it your unit that put together Dough for the Do-Do? That's the one that was the remake of Porky in Wackyland.

Clampett made one in black-and-white. And I saw it after Clampett left and said, "Gee, that ought to be in color." So I made the same thing in color. I had to make up a picture or something.

That's what I wanted to know, since there was no director credit on that.

Well, that's because it was really Clampett's.

You made a film called Along Came Daffy which has Daffy Duck as a salesman, and in the cabin, there are two Yosemite Sams.

Oh, yeah. That was a mistake. We thought it was a funny idea, I guess, but we didn't know it would hurt the character. It got too vague.

It was one of those mistakes. Things you think are funny one day. And as you finally find out, your mistakes are indelible. You can't erase 'em, and there are a lot of them.

In 1953, there was that little layoff of six months or so when 3-D came in. What did you do during that time?

I just continued on.

You weren't laid off?

No. Warren Foster, Hawley Pratt, and I were the only ones in the studio. And we just continued on making pictures. Management just decided they didn't want to let me go, or my people. They figured if they let me out, I'd go somewhere else, I guess. It was never explained. We were very happy that they didn't cut us off. I think Chuck went over to Disney.

[He did. - H.M.]

Let me ask you about the commercials you had told me about. When did Warner's start doing TV commercials? Was that in the early fifties, or the late fifties? You told me about Charlie the Tuna and all that.

It must have been during the late fifties, because we were over here in Burbank at that time. I think Dave DePatie was one of the guys who wanted to do commercials. So was Jack Warner, Jr.

The period that Warner went into doing commercials was the days when they were doing *The Outlaw*, *77 Sunset Strip*, and some of the other popular shows. The commercials were supposed to go with these. But Jack Warner [Senior] hated them. He hated to



Produced by WARNER BROS. CARTOONS, INC.,

do commercials on his lot, because they came with agents, and the agents were telling everybody what to do. It disturbed him very much that they were doing commercials on his lot.

Were you doing any commercials?

I was doing the animated ones. We did Charlie Tuna when Dave DePatie came over and became manager. After Eddie Selzer was out, they put Johnny Burton out for about a year. Then they put DePatie in.

Anyhow, whenever animated commercials came into the studio, they were assigned to whoever thought they had the time to do them, or who they felt they could trust to do them well. I did Charlie Tuna, Kaiser foil, Skippy peanut butter...

You mentioned something about a parrot.

Oh sure, Gillette. I did a couple they were very happy with.

I want to ask you about Philbert. What do you recall about being approached about that?

[Philbert is an unaired live-action/animation TV pilot starring William Schallert as a cartoonist whose cartoon character, Philbert, comes to life a la Fleischer's Koko the Clown. The live action was directed by Richard Donner (Superman, Lethal Weapon, etc.); Freleng directed the animation. For more information on this project, please buy my book! - J.B.]

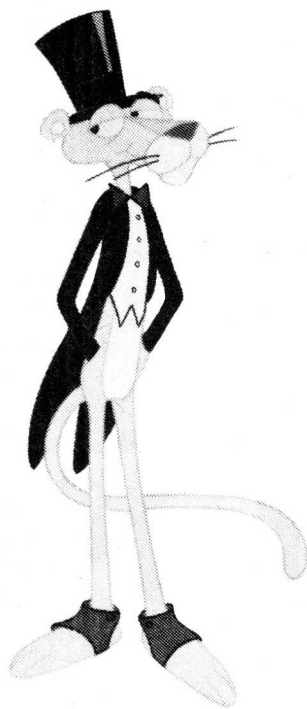
I approached them. I wrote it and approached them, and they liked the idea. But they figured it would cost about \$800,000, and you couldn't get your money back on that. They put in every damn charge they could from every picture being made, they popped it onto the cost.

They said I would share in the profit, but it wouldn't even show a profit in twenty more years. They don't even know they've got it now.

That was a project you came up with?

Yeah. They accepted it, I did it, and they sold it. ABC bought it. I don't know how many shows - at that time they'd buy twenty-odd shows. And they penciled it in for Sunday at eight o'clock. But Tom Moore, who was

Freleng's biggest post-Warner Bros. star: the Pink Panther. Copyright (c) 1989 Mirisch-Geoffrey DF.



head of ABC, was involved in that payola thing, and they handed him a pink slip and cancelled everything that Warner's did.

Getting into DePatie-Freleng, and how that came to be. Warner's was closing, and you decided, "Well, I gotta stay in business..."

Here's how it really happened. Warner's closed up, and I went over to Hanna-Barbera. I took John Dunn with me.

You went over to Hanna-Barbera? I never heard that before.

I went over to Hanna-Barbera. We went over there to do a feature with Yogi Bear [Hey There, It's Yogi Bear], and John and I, and a layout man went over there, and I made a deal to do a feature.

You mean you were going to direct the Yogi Bear film?

We were doing the storyboards to start with. That's all I was going to do, is just the final storyboards for them. I had to make a deal to produce it for them, just to do the story.

So John and I did the whole boards, then that was it. In the meantime, we heard that Warner's was going to open up again. Dave DePatie called me and

said, "How would you like to go into business with me? I haven't got anything to lose, and I think I can swing it so we can take over this studio." You know, just the facilities.

So he went to his dad, and we made a deal with Warner's to lease the studio from them. They gave it to us just the way we left it. Everything was still there.

So you took over the Warner Bros. cartoon studio.

We took over the whole studio for five hundred dollars a month. We started by making commercials. Warner's had one job there that was an army job, I think it was. That kept us going.

So meantime, Blake Edwards was on the lot doing *The Great Race*. And he asked me to do a storyboard. He said, "I think I'd like to do an animated title on this." He loved cartoons, used to run the hell out of them and get his gags out of them.

So I said, "Let me read the script." He hadn't put the show together yet. So I designed a storyboard, with all the gags, just the way you'd see it on the screen. He looked at it, and he didn't change a thing.

The Mirisch Company was over on the Goldwyn Lot. Martin Jarreau was the producer. I showed it to him, and he was like insane, running down the hall, laughing, screaming, calling people in.

So I went ahead and did the film down at the old cartoon studio.

I asked who was going to do the music, and they said Hank Mancini was going to do it. And I said, "Can I talk to him? I'd like to do this all to music." So after a few days, Hank Mancini came in. And I said, "What are you doing to do for music?" And he said, "I have no idea."

So I said, "At least give me a tempo to work by." So he went like this [drums a tempo], and said, "That's it," and walked out. And I had to figure out how many frames to the beat that was. I figured about twelve, so I did the whole thing to twelve, except for a couple of spots. I always timed all my stuff on music sheets, and wherever I wanted special things done, I would indicate.

Time magazine picked it up, and we started doing titles for everyone. I remember Billy Wilder calling me up and saying, "Could you come over? I have a title I need for a picture, and I'd like you to do it as an animated title for me." So

I went over there, and he gave me a script. I came back, and I was reading the script.

Meanwhile, all these writeups came out about *The Pink Panther*. And one of the articles said the title did better than the picture. Billy Wilder calls me up right away and says, "Cancel it! I don't want any title to be better than my picture." [Laughs] He canceled out because of the success of *The Pink Panther*.

Then United Artists called us....

How long was it between that film coming out and that happening? Was it right away, or a week later? And did they ask for one, or for a series right away?

It wasn't very long. United Artists said, "Would you like to do a whole series of these? We'll finance you, and we'll be partners." What could we lose?

So the first one I did was *The Pink Phink*, and it won an Academy Award. So I figure, hell, these things happen. I didn't make them happen, they just happened.

Unbelievable. And it was a great cartoon.

A few years after that, you also did all these other series, like The Inspector. How did that come about? You were the opposite of the whole industry. Everybody was talking about how it was dying, and you were actually beginning at that time, and building.

Well, then the networks came to us, and we were doing network shows. Then we did [TV specials like] *My Mom's Having a Baby*, and *Dr. Seusses...*

Personally, I couldn't do all these things, and it just got out of hand. As long as I had control, we were doing good work. But later, there was a lot of stuff that I was embarrassed to look at. We couldn't control it, because there was just too much to handle.

Let me backtrack. How soon after you established DePatie-Freleng did you have an arrangement with Warner's to do new cartoons? You did new cartoons with all the characters.

Well, mostly, they wanted the combination of Daffy and Speedy Gonzales. They called the shots on that. When we were in business for ourselves, whatever they wanted, we were going to do. As

long as I didn't have to [personally] do them.

There was more than we could handle. We were doing titles, we were doing series for networks. So we farmed these out to UPA.

Was that everything, or just the Road Runners?

Yes, mostly the Road Runners.

[Though Freleng refers to UPA, he is actually thinking of Herbert Klynn's Format Films, which was a refuge for most of UPA's top talent. - J.B.]

Then Jack Warner wanted to go back into animation again. We got all the big credit that we got, and he wanted to get back into animation because of it. So we said, "Great! We'd love to have the studio. Now we can call our own shots, our own terms." But when we read the contract, it said we didn't share in the old characters. We had to create new characters, which we could share in 50%-50% with Warner's.

But another stipulation was that we had to drop the Pink Panther. Dave DePatie's father said, "Don't do it." He was advising us. So we said, "No way."

You get some royalties on licensing, don't you?

On the Pink Panther, yes.

As long as I've been in the cartoon business, through the Warner days, all I ever heard was, "Well, I don't know how long we're going to be able to retain this business. We can't get another nickel for these cartoons - we don't get any more money for them than we did in '39." And that was the story we kept hearing.

With Schlesinger, it was, "Cut down the cost, cut down the cost." With Warner's, "Cut down the cost. If we want to stay in business, we better cut these things down." We started limiting the animation. We used to have more characters, but then everything was down to two characters. Which turned out to be the best, anyhow.

You felt so insecure. All you wanted was to have a job next week. So when Warner's turned them over to us, we wanted to make a dollar. We didn't think the future of 'em. We got them made as cheap as we could, because Dave made us give it to them as cheap as we could, and we had to make a little bit of a profit. And as you can see, the cartoons suffered from that.

But when Warner's said we could either drop the Pink Panther or get our ass off of his lot, we got our ass off of that lot. We went to United Artists, and they said, "Okay, we'll give you the money to start a studio. We'll get our money back through the pictures."

We went over into the Union Bank building over on Ventura Boulevard and took a whole floor, and started making pictures there. And we gradually paid back all the money that United Artists put up for us. And UA came out well. Blake Edwards gets the biggest piece now, because he's always complained.

It was a 25-25-25-25 deal. United Artists got 25% of the net, for distribution and all that. Blake Edwards took 25%, Mirisch took 25%, and we got 25%. But we didn't see a dollar until about '81 or '82. When Dave and I closed that place in 1979, we owed the bank \$600,000.

But thank goodness, the pictures were running, and they kept running. We started getting revenues, we paid off the banks, and United Artists got their money back.

Locally, KCOP had the Pink Panther, and they figured, "Well, that's not a kid's show." See, we made them for the theaters, and we made them for adults really. That's what they're finding out about the Warner cartoons: adults are the people who are really the fans.

So they took them off of KCOP's childrens' show. They figured that these pictures appeal to people from about age 15-35, they didn't appeal to children five, three, four years old. They're a little too sophisticated. And United Artists now is putting them on their video tapes, so you get a cartoon and a movie like you used to in the old days.

Maybe someday, I have a feeling, cartoons will go back into the theaters. They are so popular now, especially after *Roger Rabbit*.

In fact, the rumor I hear is that they might actually produce a few shorts with Roger Rabbit. Only Disney could do it now, I think, because they have the whole setup, the distribution. They can do everything.

Oh, sure. They can spend a lot of money on it, too, and not expect to get any back. They have to make cartoons to keep the Walt Disney name alive. It's called overhead. Who would have gambled on *Roger Rabbit*? There isn't another studio.

THE TRIUMPH OF TERMITE TERRACE

BY DAVID BASTIAN



That's All Folks! The Art of Warner Bros. Animation

By Steve Schneider
Henry Holt & Company; \$39.95

"You know, I think we should put some mountains here. Otherwise what are the characters going to fall off of?"

Laurie Anderson, "Big Science"

The Kodak company has a gigantic backlit billboard in the middle of Times Square commemorating the sixtieth birthday of Mickey Mouse. The picture displays Mickey (the 1980s design) shaking hands with Steamboat Willie on the deck of his black-and-white boat. This little nod to the past would have been hard to imagine twenty years ago when the studio's philosophy seemed to be "bigger is better." Not until the historians who grew up with *The Mickey Mouse Club* were the new animation regime would the cartoons of the rubber-hose days be appreciated as more than just seminal work.

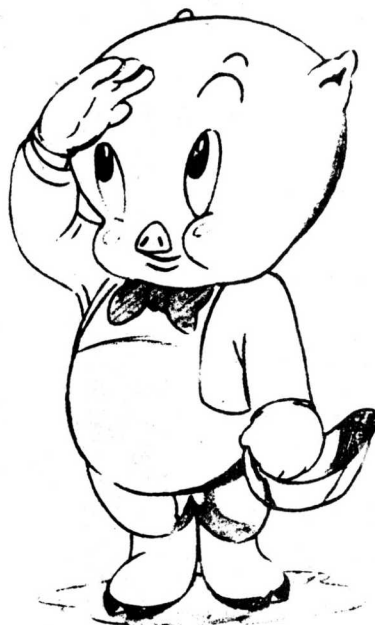
But that's not all. Tower Records, music headquarters to the East Village, is dotted with video monitors, usually

tuned to MTV or showing the latest concert video. But one day I walked by they were showing *Lady and the Tramp*. And the day before that it was *Winsome Witch!* Later that evening, I saw Gertie the Dinosaur pitch a new automobile in a TV ad, while an art gallery less than a mile away pitched serigraphs of Felix the Cat! As if, following Andy Warhol's lead, every artist is searching for his own pop image with which to associate himself (read exploit).

The question I would like to ask is why all these things had to happen; why animation both good and bad, black and white, sound and silent had to be this enmeshed in the public conscience before a publisher would take the risk of banking on a book devoted to "the art of Warner Bros. animation."

It's not as if they needed a nudge. Even before 1974, when the AFI issued an issue of their quarterly report containing seven articles on animation, cineastes have been writing intelligent expositions championing the underappreciated Looney Tunes. While dozens of these articles got published, most remained "underground." Not until Leon-

All illustrations accompanying this essay are reprinted from *That's All Folks!* and copyright (c) 1989 Warner Communications, Inc.



ard Maltin's definitive *Of Mice and Magic* (1980) created a sense of order could callous film journals and animation fans with no taste for hunting out *Funnyworld* and *Mindrot* discover that Tex Avery was not the only "King of Cartoons."

That year also saw the emergence of *The American Animated Cartoon*, Gerald and Danny Peary's collection of essays on animation, which contained articles on Avery, Clampett, McKimson (!), and an exceptional interview with Chuck Jones. All of a sudden, it was possible to gain a sense of chronology and individual accomplishment that had been lacking.

The following year, when Jerry Beck and Will Friedwald's filmography of *The Warner Bros. Cartoons* saw daylight, enough reference material was in place. The Museum of Modern Art finally completed the dot-to-dot with its 1985 exhibition of Warner Bros. art. Termite Terrace could finally be viewed from Olympus.

The amazing thing is that there was any artwork to be viewed. Unlike the infamous Disney Archives, the WB

studio didn't have the foresight or the room to save all the artwork that today would be valuable artifacts. Generally, cels were tossed out, were cleaned off to be reused, or ended up in the collection of Bob Clampett. There aren't enough extant souvenirs to amass an "Art of..." or a "Treasures of..." book.

But those drawings, backgrounds, model sheets, and sketches that did manage to make it out alive tell a story that to many WB admirers is long overdue. Steve Schneider was guest-curator of the MoMA exhibit, and his book, like that show, is a record of one studio's attempt to produce art in a medium governed by money. Schneider divides the studio's 39-year history into five phases: Harman and Ising's embryonic partnership with Leon Schlesinger; the discovery of the studio's identity through Tex Avery; Bob Clampett's reign of wild energy and explosiveness; the years of refinement and maturity led by Jones and Freleng; and the eventual decline in quality that permeated the studio's final ten years.

In doing so, Schneider relies heavily on research that came before him. Identical quotes from interviews conducted

by Leonard Maltin and Joe Adamson, used in their respective books, are reprinted here to help argue the same points. At times, it seems as though Schneider is merely reiterating their opinions as well. Aficionados of WB's history won't find much that they haven't heard before. But though Maltin has already told this studio's tale, it shared his book with ten other studios. Schneider has room to spread out and elaborate on the specific contributions and pivotal films of each director.

Bob Clampett has never been so seriously dealt with. His place alongside Tex Avery as animation's most intractable lunatics is at last asserted. In the same manner, Robert McKimson's undeniable influence on many of the characters' construction and personalities is finally made note of. Schneider's heart obviously belongs to Chuck Jones, whose "modern myths about greed and obsession" inspired the author to contemplate them in much greater depth than he does the work of the other directors.

By reconstructing an image of the studio at which many talents were pooled to a common end, Schneider once and for all renders moot the tired question "Who really created Bugs Bunny?" The entire studio seemed to always be in the process of altering and developing its own identity under the leadership of each successive regime. So of course, the characters would also grow and develop along with it. Had there been a Walt Disney at WB to tighten the reins, Bugs may have ended up as rudimentary a character as Mickey Mouse.

In the book's second half, Schneider details the careers of fifteen of the studio's most famous characters, beginning with the film debut of each (often, as in Bugs's case, several attempts were necessary before a persona fully emerged). Along the way, Schneider makes note of the original source of each character, be it a derivation from a popular radio show character or a reference to a studio employee. In addition, he thoroughly documents the myriad catch-phrases, gags, and relevant tunes that were lifted from period songs, movies, and other sources. These tidbits of lost local color make up the treasure trove of this book, and together with the illustrations are the reason for owning it.

The reasons why all the WB shorts were long denied the status of "art" for so long will forever mystify me, though

(Continued on page 38)

TAPES ON TAPE

A VIDEO COLUMN BY MATTHEW HASSON

WARTIME WARNERS AND OTHER NEW TAPES

This issue's column will focus on several recent videotape releases of Warner Bros. cartoons...

Bugs & Daffy: The Wartime Cartoons
Hosted by Leonard Maltin; MGM/UA Home Video; \$19.95

This is the first "theme" collection of Warner Bros. shorts to come from MGM/UA, the company that owns the rights to the pre-1948 Warner library. It has previously issued several Warner's collections of "The Best of Bugs," "The Best of Daffy," etc., but these tapes tend to repeat the same selections over and over. This tape features several that have never before been made available on video, and which seldom get shown on television because of their dated content. Leonard Maltin (author of *Of Mice and Magic* and *The Disney Films*, and critic on *Entertainment Tonight*) offers insightful comments on the period in which these cartoons were made and the role propaganda cartoons played in the war effort.

Warner Bros. made several cartoons in black and white that could be classified as "wartime propaganda," but only color ones are included here, since the black and white ones have fallen into the public domain. Highlights of the tape include Bob Clampett's *Russian Rhapsody*, featuring "Gremlins from the Kremlin" who torture and torment Hitler himself. (The gremlins are actually caricatures of the Warner Bros. staff.) Frank Tashlin's *Daffy Commando* gives Daffy the opportunity to bash old Adolf

over the head with a mallet. It also features a little German soldier named Schultz who bears a startling resemblance to Vaughn Bode's Cheech Wizard character.

Tashlin's *Plane Daffy* pits our hero against the sexy se-duck-tress Hata Mari, and the kissing scenes in this one would never make it past the censors if it were made today. In Friz Freleng's *Herr Meets Hare*, Bugs matches wits with Hitler's right-hand man Hermann Goering, and fools the silly Nazi by disguising himself as Hitler and Stalin. Chuck Jones's *Weakly Reporter* is a spoof of wartime newsreels, depicting life in a time of tire and gas rationing, food shortages, and women doing "men's work."

The remaining cartoons on the tape, including *Draftee Daffy*, *Swooner Crooner*, and *Little Red Riding Rabbit*, don't specifically deal with the war itself, but do have war-related themes or references. Also included is Bob Clampett's *Falling Hare*, which is an excellent cartoon, but has appeared on so many other video collections that it doesn't really have to be included on this one.

Noticeably missing from this collection is *Bugs Bunny Nips the Nips*, which is a bit too racy to be shown today. Its unflattering portrayal of the Japanese would shock some people for its racism, but one should keep in mind that Pearl Harbor was still a fresh and painful memory, and America was still pretty mad. Still, it makes one wince to hear Bugs Bunny calling Japanese sol-

diers "monkey face" and "slant eyes."

Bugs Bunny Superstar
Produced by Larry Jackson; MGM/UA; \$19.95

This compilation feature, released theatrically in 1975, contains interviews with Warner Bros. directors Bob Clampett, Tex Avery, and Friz Freleng. Most of the cartoons in this collection have appeared on other tapes, so unless you are just beginning your WB collection, the interviews are the only new material here worth seeing. (The cartoons are shown with complete titles and are taken from excellent-quality prints.)

Bugs Bunny is the star, of course, but we are also treated to cartoons including Foghorn Leghorn's *Walky Talky Hawky*. Orson Welles provides some voice-over introductions, and interviews with the directors fill the spaces between the shorts. Avery and Freleng offer some interesting anecdotes, but most of the interview time is dominated by the egotistical Bob Clampett, who practically takes over the program from host Welles. Clampett does his best to give the impression that he was responsible for all of the studio's successes, regardless of the contributions of his fellow directors and artists.

It should also be noted that more than half the cartoons in this collection are Clampett-directed, although I have no idea if he was involved in the selection of titles for this feature. Though he was unpopular with his colleagues for the above-mentioned claims, he was still



one of the greatest directors Warner's ever had, and if your collection doesn't already have such Clampett classics as *What's Cookin' Doc*, *A Corny Concerto*, and *The Old Grey Hare*, then this would be a good addition.

Carnival of the Animals

Directed by Chuck Jones; Warner Bros. Home Video; \$14.95

Produced and directed by Chuck Jones as a CBS prime-time special in 1976, this cartoon features the work of some of the ex-Warner director's old staff of artists, including Phil Monroe, Ben Washam, and Manuel Perez. Unfortunately, the special doesn't have much to offer in the way of humor. It was clearly made with a younger audience in mind, with the hope of turning kids on to classical music.

It succeeds on that level, I suppose, but for fans of classic Bugs and Daffy cartoons, it is a disappointment. The first five minutes consist of Bugs and Daffy arguing over how to pronounce "Saint Saens" ("Sahnt Sahnzz..."). They then take turns reciting Ogden Nash verses over dueling pianos accompanied by a live orchestra. The "Carnival of the Animals" itself is presented in a much different, abstract style of limited animation, and in some spots resembles Jones's earlier theatrical short *The Dot and the Line*.

This educational/cultural cartoon might look good if it were made for PBS, but somehow Bugs and Daffy seem out of place here, dressed in full tuxedos, reciting Ogden Nash poetry, and man-aging *not* to be funny.

Inside Termite Terrace Volumes 1 and 2

Bosko Video; 24.95 each

These new collections are currently available only by mail order. They include some black-and-white rarities unavailable anywhere else, plus some behind-the-scenes footage of the studio staff clowning around on camera.

Volume 1 includes perhaps the rarest Warner's cartoon of them all, *Bosko the Talk-ink Kid*, produced by Hugh Harman and Rudolf Ising. This is actually a "pilot" cartoon made by the former Disney animators sometime in 1929, and was never screened theatrically; it was responsible for the series being bought by producer Leon Schlesinger. It also introduced what was then a relative novelty; synchronized dialogue. (At the time, Mickey Mouse's dialogue was still limited to squawks and squeaks.)

Animator Rudy Ising has a conversation with Bosko, the character he has just invented on his drawing board. Bosko's appearance is the same as in the later series, but his voice gives away the fact that he is a caricature of a black man. He would later be given a Mickey

Mouse-type voice, but here he sounds like "Uncle Tom." (It is interesting to watch these early sound cartoons, made when animators were still learning how to animate speech. Characters open and close their mouths with each syllable, and you can see all of their teeth, not unlike puppets or ventriloquism dummies.)

Also on Volume 1 is a great collection of black-and-white classics, all taken from excellent-quality prints: *Goopy Gear* (starring a short-lived WB character who never quite made it), *Porky's Pooch* (a Bob Clampett short that inspired Chuck Jones's Charlie Dog series), and *Robinson Crusoe Jr.*, starring Porky Pig as Crusoe and a caricature of Eddie "Rochester" Anderson. Two color entries round off this volume: *Presto Change-O*, which features the snickering white rabbit who would later evolve into Bugs Bunny, and *A Tale of Two Kitties*, with the first appearance of Tweety Pie.

Volume 2 opens with *Sinkin' in the Bathtub*, Bosko's first regular cartoon and the very first Looney Tune. Other black-and-white titles included are *Bosko Shipwrecked*, *Red Headed Baby*, *Porky Pig's Feat*, *Porky's Bear Facts*, and *Smile, Darn Ya, Smile!* (The last of which's title song became the theme for Toontown in *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?*)

The highlight of Volume 2 is *Tokyo Jokio*, but not because it is a funny cartoon; it isn't. It's a shocking piece of anti-Japanese propaganda which is even more offensive than *Bugs Bunny Nips the Nips*. While its ugly caricatures and racially-insulting gags were aimed at the Japanese, the cartoon is bound to offend anyone of Oriental ancestry. It's even more disturbing to think that when this was made, thousands of Japanese-Americans were being imprisoned in detention camps.

Color cartoons make up the remainder of Volume 2: *Bugs Bunny Bond Rally*, presented here in the best quality to date; *Corny Concerto*; *Daffy Duck and the Dinosaur*, and *The Wacky Wabbit*, which are already available on other collections.

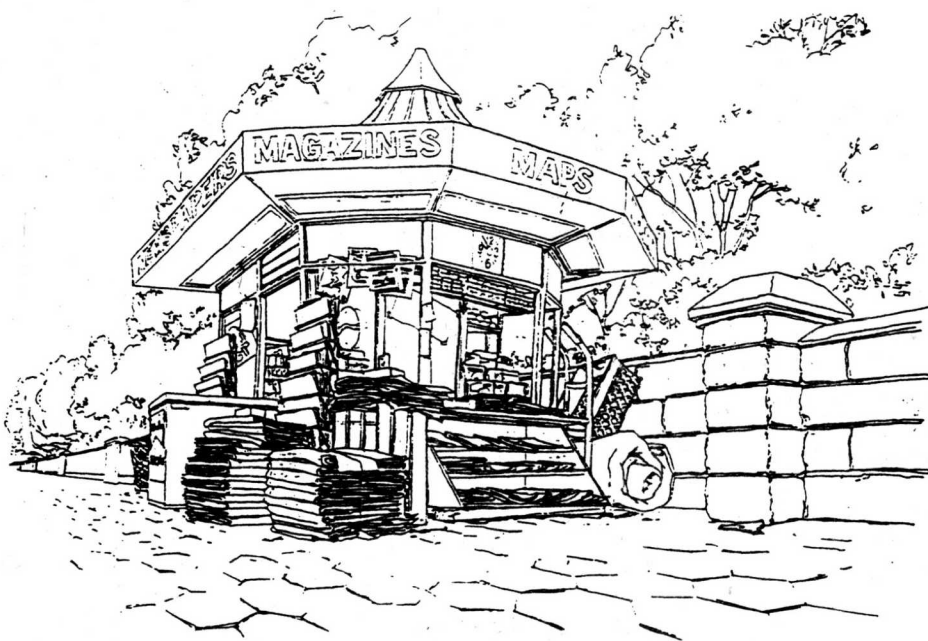
Inside Termite Terrace Volumes 1 and 2 can be ordered from Starbur Corporation, 23301 Meadow Park, Redford, MI 48239, for \$24.95 each plus \$2.50 postage.

Matthew Hasson is a cartoon buff who always enjoys hearing from other collectors of animation on videotape. Write to him c/o Animato.

"ONCE UPON A TIME IN NEW YORK CITY"

AN INTERVIEW WITH
GEORGE SCRIBNER, DIRECTOR OF

OLIVER & Company



Who Framed Roger Rabbit may have been the biggest event in Disney animation in 1988, but Oliver & Company, the animated feature the studio released in November, was also a major success. Reaching theaters the same day as Don Bluth and Steven Spielberg's *The Land Before Time*, Oliver went on to have the most successful initial U.S. release of any animated feature, Disney or otherwise, in history. (The previous champion had been Bluth and Spielberg's *An American Tail*.)

George Scribner, who served as an animator on Disney's *The Black Cauldron*,

made his animated-feature directorial debut with Oliver & Company. A native of Panama and graduate of Boston University and Emerson College, Scribner has also worked at studios including Hanna-Barbera and Chuck Jones Productions. In December, Harry McCracken interviewed him about Oliver & Company in specific and his approach to animation in general.

The inspirational sketches and storyboard drawings accompanying this interview are copyright (c) 1989 The Walt Disney Company.

MCCRACKEN: How did Oliver & Company get started as a project at Disney?

SCRIBNER: I was an animator on *Black Cauldron*, and I always wanted to get into story, because I had done some direction in little theater in Panama, which is where I was from. I got into story with a guy named Pete Young, and we started together.

At the time, Jeffrey [Katzenberg] and Michael [Eisner] and the new management team had started, and they were having lunches with all the people who were involved in story, and they asked for three ideas. Three ideas were submitted by everybody, and one of the ideas was just a paragraph: "*Oliver Twist* set in New York City, present day. Fagin is a rat, and he's got a gang of animals to steal for him."

That was one of the ideas they liked, and we went into development with it. And that's how it started. It took roughly six to nine months before it really started getting off the ground. We started showing boards and developing it further and further, to the point where Fagin became a human and the gang became a gang of dogs, and Oliver was isolated as a kitten to visually set him off.

This was Christmas of 1984. It started full force in 1985.

And how did you get the job of directing it? Had you done any animation directing before?

A little bit, but not an enormous amount. They were basically just looking for someone at Disney to direct the project; at the time there were very few directors in animation. They knew I had done some direction in theater, and about six months into the project I was asked if I was interested in directing it.

Was your theater experience helpful in directing animation?

Yes, it was. The principal difference is one of scale. In theater, you're finished in three or four months - you've got a couple of run-throughs and maybe a two or three-week run. Animation just goes on for an enormously long time, even compared to a live-action feature.

It was also helpful, because I tended to view animation in terms of acting, rather than just in terms of animation. I don't look at it as "Because it's ani-

mation, it's special," or subject to different performance rules. It just happens to be performances that are animated, rather than put over on stage.

You mentioned that Fagin was originally a rat; what were other changes in the story that happened along the way?

We went through a whole series of variations on what the character of Oliver would look like. At one time Oliver and Dodger were two kittens, then they were two dogs. We just went back and forth, trying to find what was most interesting visually, what would isolate the character most. We felt that like in the musical and some of the other features [of *Oliver Twist*], it would help to isolate him if he were a different type of character, so we made him a kitten, and the rest of the characters dogs.

The other principal thing was that originally there was a panda involved, that Fagin kidnaps with his gang. Oliver just happens to have run in with this gang, and he feels for this panda and helps him return to the Central Park Zoo.

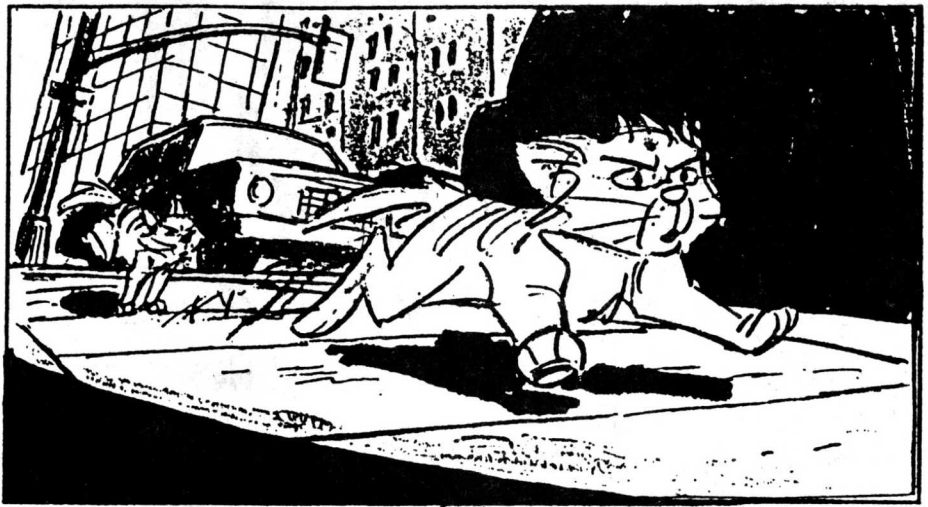
We worked with that for about nine months before we realized that we were dissipating our focus of sympathy. The affections were split between Oliver and the panda. So the major shift was in effect replacing the panda with the character of Jenny, the little girl.

That was the major change. The rest of it was just redoing sequences and changing their focus. Sykes was the last character to be introduced, and we came up with the idea of giving him dobermans. That allowed us to depict him on a dog level. It was much more interesting to depict it on the level of the animals, rather than on Sykes'. I generally find human animation not as interesting as when its done with animals or other creatures that you can endow with that type of thing.

You obviously took a lot of liberties with Dickens. Were you concerned at all about working with a famous book?

No, because we just used it as a starting-off point. It took its own course. We watched the musical and read the book, but it just evolved from it.

Oliver is definitely an eighties film - probably as much as any Disney feature, it's clearly set in the period it was made in. Was it hard to strike a balance be-



tween that and making something that people will still enjoy in the years to come?

You mean getting a level of timeliness? When I first began the project, I really wanted to make sure that we avoided colloquialisms, references to this period of the eighties, so it wouldn't be so topical that within a matter of years the picture would seem dated. But the more I got into it, the more I felt if we can't be true to the period, it's not going to have any feeling that it's really occurring. And that included being true to the city of New York graphically; for instance, using current ads, billboards, etcetera, at some points.

No matter what, it will appear dated. There's nothing I can do about that. I guess I felt that if the characters were true to themselves and true to the story that the principal element of the story

would carry on, based on emotions that never change.

The eighties feel in Oliver worked much better than something like The Aristocats, which has an early seventies flavor but is set in Paris at the turn of the century.

Yes, I felt that as long as it was true to its environment, it would play all right. *Aristocats* is a good example. It's a picture that's set in Paris, but its mannerisms and visual definitions are American - there's jazz, and so on, although you could argue that jazz was a very strong movement in Paris in the twenties. But I'm not sure where that psychedelic sequence in the end came from, or what it has to do with the picture.

That's an extreme example of the idea - of trying to be so hip, so in tune with what's going on that it's over the top



and has nothing to do with either the characters or the picture. That's hardly what *Oliver* is. I think it's true to those characters, and they would speak that way.

In directing a Disney film, you have to do things in the "Disney style" to a great extent. Was that difficult, or was it more of a help, since it's such a well-developed style?

I've never felt that it's been a hindrance or an asset. I guess I just feel I have a natural affinity for it, not because it's a visual style, but because Disney anima-

tion tends to be character-driven. I find that to be the reason Disney's work excels and appeals to so many people.

So it wasn't something looming over me. It may be partially because I was never really into animation or the features when I grew up. I grew up in Panama, and I'm not sure if we even got them there. It wasn't until about ten years ago that I got interested in it.

I didn't feel I had any mandate to follow a tradition or anything. I just set out to make the picture like I saw it.

So things like the backgrounds, which are more "realistic" and grittier than your

average Disney backgrounds, weren't an issue? You didn't worry about having graffiti all over a wall and that sort of thing?

No, we didn't.

I've seen several reviews that compared the backgrounds to Bakshi's work. I don't know if that was an influence, or if they said that because when people see an urban look in animation they automatically think of Bakshi.

Yeah. Ralph's work tended to be line over wash. Maybe the similarity they're p

A REVIEW OF *OLIVER & COMPANY*:

DISNEY ANIMATION ENTERS THE MIDLER AGE, WINNINGLY

For fifty years, it has not been common for Disney animated features to be set in a time and place that much resemble those of their making. The country such a film is set in is substantially more likely to be England than the United States; the year is most often identified sketchily, if at all.

Times and the Disney studio have changed, and *Oliver & Company* announces its identity as a product of the Walt Disney studio of the late 1980s in many ways: its setting in a fairly realistic present-day New York; the product placements located strategically throughout the film; the presence of Bette Midler. Happily, *Oliver* manages not only to survive all this, but also to be a better film than *The Great Mouse Detective*, *The Fox and the Hound*, and even some of the Woolie Reitherman films it recalls.

The heart of what's right about *Oliver & Company* is the success with which it makes Fagin's gang of thieving dogs into real, likable personalities. (Oliver himself is just a cute kitten, but then, Dickens's *Oliver Twist* was essentially a cute orphan boy.) The film has its share of slapstick, chases, and other loud and funny material meant to please kids; but it's admirable how often it slows its pace to deal in some very well-done character comedy. The scene in which the dogs tuck Fagin into bed and slip a dog biscuit into his mouth is one of the

funniest, most genuinely warm moments in any Disney cartoon in years.

Music, for so long such an important part of Disney animation, had fallen into increasing neglect after *The Jungle Book*; *Oliver & Company* returns it to its rightful place, with reasonably satisfactory results. In particular, "Perfect Isn't Easy," the sassy, satirical song and sequence that introduce Georgette, the Bette Midler-voiced pampered poodle, is a highlight of the film and recent Disney animation in general. The movie's pop songs are pleasant enough, and the musical numbers nicely staged; the emphasis is on using them to help define the characters and set moods. They succeed at doing that, but don't really move the story along as the songs in the great Disney features usually did. (The next Disney animated feature, *The Little Mermaid*, features a score by *Little Shop of Horrors*'s Howard Ashman; it will be interesting to see how much it resembles the early features in its use of music.)

Disney's use of computer animation, which made possible *The Great Mouse Detective*'s stunning clocktower scene, continues in *Oliver*, which is chockablock with computer-generated backgrounds and effects work. Sometimes the computer animation works, as when it creates a spiral staircase for Georgette to saunter down; in other instances it doesn't, like that of the film's strangely

angular, unbattered taxicabs, which bear little resemblance to any Manhattan taxi I've ever seen.

With *The Little Mermaid* and *The Rescuers Down Under*, Roger Rabbit shorts, Mickey Mouse featurettes, and numerous TV projects in the works, there's no doubt that we'll be seeing a lot of Disney cartoons in future months. What kind of standard of quality can be maintained in all this upcoming animation is open to question, but if much of it equals *Oliver & Company* (or better yet, builds on its accomplishments), it will be worth the considerable time it will take to seek it all out.

Harry McCracken

Selected Credits:

Directed by George Scribner

Animation Screenplay: Jim Cox, Timothy J. Disney, James Mangold

Supervising Animators: Mike Gabriel, Glen Keane, Ruben A. Aquino, Hendel Butoy, Mark Henn, Doug Krohn

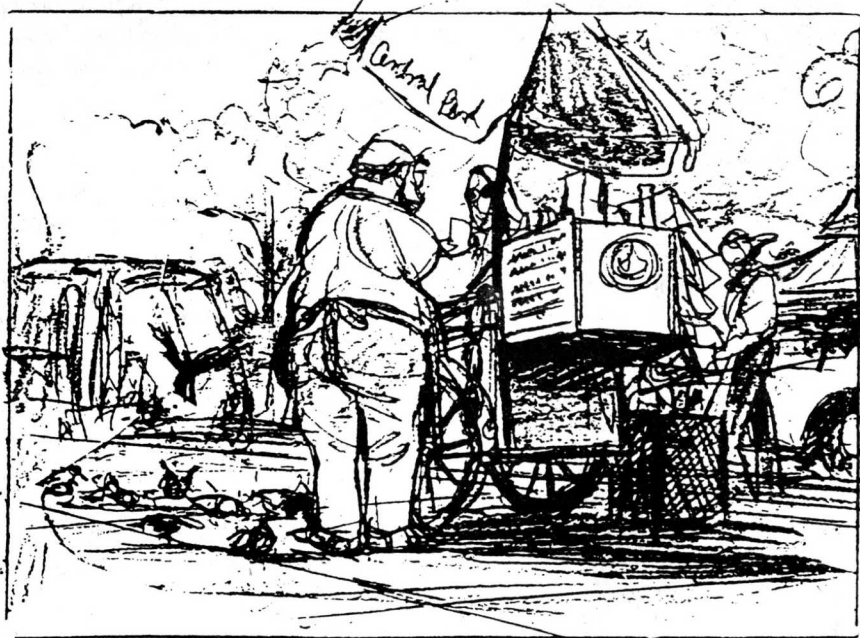
Art Direction: Dan Hansen

Character Design: Mike Gabriel, Andreas Deja, Glen Keane

Production Stylist: Guy Deel

Computer Animation: Tina Price, Michael Cedeno

Voices: Joey Lawrence (Oliver), Billy Joel (Dodger), Cheech Marin (Tito), Richard Mulligan (Einstein), Roscoe Lee Browne (Francis), Sheryl Lee Ralph (Rita), Dom DeLuise (Fagin), Taurean Blacque (Roscoe), Carl Weintraub (DeSoto), Robert Loggia (Sykes), Natalie Gregory (Jenny)



pointing out is that we used Xeroxed-line backgrounds. Generally, the backgrounds [in recent Disney features] have been very simple washes without an acetate line on top. We decided to go with that look to get a feeling of edge in the city, and also to match the line of the characters. I didn't feel that simply painting it without line would be true to the city.

I wanted to depict it from the vantage-point of the animals, twelve to twenty inches high. You're right, we've gotten some criticism for it. But that was our choice; it was deliberate.

The backgrounds in Jenny's house seem to be done in a different style.

We were trying to make a distinction between the two environments; the environment of the wharf and Fagin's barge, and her apartment. We were originally even a little softer with it; we tended to go with grey Xerox lines instead of a black line, just to give it a little more warmth and a little less edge, so there'd be a real distinction visually. You wouldn't pick up on it consciously, but would feel the distinction between the two environments.

Were there any Disney films, or non-Disney films, that particularly influenced the film?

I would say *Lady and the Tramp* has always been one of my favorites, in a number of ways. It seems to be one of the features that deals almost exclusively with the world as viewed by the ani-

mals. It stays with them pretty much all through the picture; it's about their problems and what they go through and stuff.

I also found *Lady and the Tramp* to be very interesting in the way it was done graphically. Not in terms of line, but the way color and values of light were used. I'm not saying we were as successful at all, but that was certainly what I was striving for.

Oliver is the first real musical the studio has done in a long time, certainly in terms of the number of songs, and the importance of songs. Was there a decision to do it as a musical early on, or did that just grow out of the story?

There was a decision early on to try and involve music with it. But it's funny: I always viewed it not as a musical, but as a picture with music. I made a mental note on my own, along perhaps with some of the key members of the staff, not to treat it as a musical, where the conceit of the story would abruptly stop, and you'd go into a song.

I think the distinction is important, because it helped us treat the pieces of music as essentially an extension of character. Rather than stopping to put over a plot point, it would essentially be more of a character piece. In Dodger's case, his song "Why Should I Worry?" was originally just dialogue. He meets the kitten, throws him a sausage, and says, "Hey! You want it, come and get it!" And the kitten just follows him down to the dock; it was played without music.

What I tried to get across to the people who wrote the music was, "Forget where we're going to take this music, or the fact that it will be on an album. As far as I'm concerned, I don't care if it's released as a single or not. Write for the picture, write for character." And it's pretty successful, I think.

Were there any other particular difficulties or interesting things about working with the music?

We had multiple producers; we never had one musical composer who acted as a story person and came in and sat with us and wrote all the music. We had to custom-write every piece, which meant that every piece had to be written with a different composer and producer, a different arrangement date...It was just sort of exponential in terms of the work involved.

So the music was written over a period of time, rather than all at once?

Dodger's song was the first piece written, and we went from there. It keyed the tone of the rest of the picture.

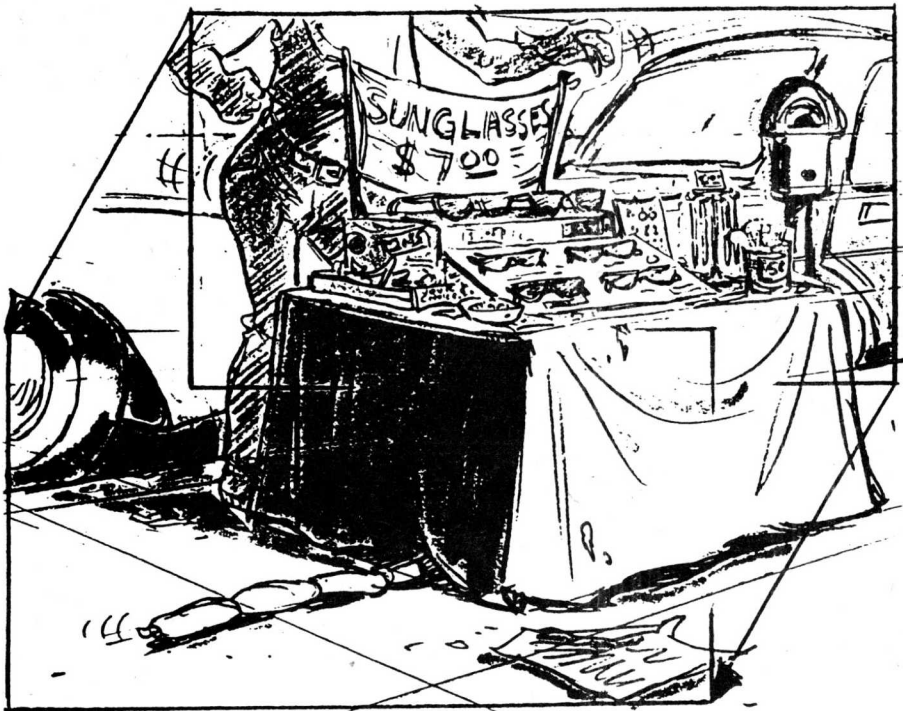
Was there any music written that wasn't used?

There was a piece written that to this day I still like, and I'd like to use it perhaps in some other form. Jenny's song at one time was a song that took place in her bedroom, and it was sort of like a jungle song. It became very fanciful; she began playing with the kitten, and they put a record on with this jungle rhythm. The bedroom becomes a jungle environment, and the two of them go through a free-form montage where they're playing, reflecting how the imagination of kids can take a simple idea and go with it.

It was really a great song. It was written by Herbie Hancock, and we never used it. The story changed, and it wasn't right for it.

As far as the famous people who do some of the voices in the movie go, were you getting people who fit the characters, or designing characters to fit the voices? Or was it a blending of the two?

It was blending the two. We started out with very clear, simple templates of what these characters would be - Dodger,



Tito, Oliver, Georgette, Rita, Francis, and Einstein. We had a fairly clear idea; it wasn't like we went into casting thinking, "We'll leave it up to the voice to define this character." We held open auditions for all the characters. We didn't go out and read Cheech [Marin] - he was like the fifth person to read for that character. Billy Joel was the same way. They came along later in the game.

After we cast it? Yes, very much so. In any animated feature, you go back in and start to rework the model based on the performance that character starts to give you.

But you would do that even if somebody nobody ever heard of was doing the voice?

Yes. For example, William Glover, who plays Winston. He's a great English actor. He was great to work with; he was very professional, and he gave readings you'd never expect. We redesigned Winston afterwards. We made him slightly heavier, and caricatured him more. We made the head a little smaller, the rear end a little larger, and the hands and feet a little more delicate. It came out because of that voice.

I assume the people who did the voices had a fun time.

They did have a fun time. Sometimes they didn't quite understand what we were doing, and in some cases they were

extraordinarily patient, because we went through numerous rewrites, and numerous recording sessions. I'd have to go back in and ask them to rerecord different sections and redo areas they felt they had already done. Their exposure was very limited; over a period of two years, they would come in maybe five times for two or three hours apiece. I'd have to regenerate their interest in the project, show them bit of the film and stuff. But they were all really into it, because most of them had kids, so they found it charming to be in a Disney picture.

One of the interesting things about Oliver is how the dogs are to some extent caricatures of the different breeds of dog. Was that a major part of the research that you and the animators did for the film?



Yeah, quite a bit. There was an animal trainer who brought in each of the breeds for the animators to draw. He would bring them in and set them up in a small area of the animation wing, and the guys would sit around and sketch them and talk about them.

I also had someone put together a compilation of dog and cat animation that had been done at the studio for years - Milt [Kahl]'s work, and Frank [Thomas] and Ollie [Johnston]'s work, Marc Davis's work, on *101 Dalmations* and *Lady and the Tramp*, and put it in books so you could get an idea of how some of these walks and runs and real interesting moves were timed. Because the work had been done, and been done so well. A lot of the animators on their own would shoot reference on videotape, and then print them out with a Minolta printer.

Could you mention a few of the animators, and which characters or sections of the film they worked on?

There were two people who designed most of the characters. An animator who worked on *Roger Rabbit*, before he left, worked on *Oliver*. His name is Andreas Deja, and he came up with the basic look of these characters. He then left to go to England, and an animator, who later became a director on *The Rescuers Down Under*, named Mike Gabriel, came in and gave the characters a look that I felt really hit it. It wasn't like he was redesigning them from scratch; he just gave them a couple of extra features and an edge that would really lock them into the voice.

The character of Tito was animated and designed by a directing animator named Hendel Butoy. Fagin and Sykes were

drawn and designed principally by Glen Keane.

That was the principal casting. There were so many characters that a lot of people had to take a lot of different sorts of characters.

The film has the most computer animation of any Disney feature - little things like cars and so forth, rather than something like the flashy clockwork sequence in Great Mouse Detective. Was it hard to integrate the computer work with the character animation?

No, because the backgrounds were line over painted backgrounds. The idea was that we would use the computer to generate objects that would be very time-consuming in effects. It was a very simple way to do it. The automobiles and a lot of three-dimensional objects - pipes, and I-beams. The interior of that tunnel at the very end is digitized. It was generated in small pieces, and then hooked together by the computer. It made it a lot simpler, because once you had the information entered in [the computer], you could also change angles, and do whatever you wanted to. The information is right there; you simply have to call it up and rotate it on the X-Y-Z axis.

From the point of view of a director it was just fantastic. But it wasn't like we had the computer and then said, "Oh wow, wouldn't it be great to do this and this and this." It was more organic. We went into it much slower; the first thing



we wanted to see was if we could generate Fagin's trike, the little thing he rides around in. I wasn't sure if we could pull it off. But by separating all the different elements on different levels - the flashing lights, the baskets, the wheels, the headlights - there's enough follow-through that it seems fairly natural. And from that point on we started using it quite a bit.

Did the computer allow you to do more of that kind of thing than you could have if you had had to do it by hand?

I would say it was just a simpler way of generating things, without a lot of crawl or volume changes. It was printed out first, and then the animators would animate on it, so you'd have separate

sheets. You'd lay your animation paper down on top and register on it.

And the computer animation is put on cels just like the hand-drawn animation?

Yes, you just treat it as another level.

Is Disney going to be going even further with computer animation in the future?

Yes, they will. Eventually, they'll probably go to a system where the computer will paint cels and things like that. It's in the future, but that's the idea.

Can you tell us anything about what you're working on now that Oliver & Company is out?

It's real loose at this time, very informal. I'm working on an idea set in the jungles of Brazil. Who the characters are or what they do, I don't even know myself. There was an idea that was submitted that I liked, and I liked the fact that it was set in that environment. That's basically all I've got.

Do you have any comments on the future of Disney animation in general?

I think it's just going to keep improving. There's a lot of support and interest in quality feature animation on the part of Eisner and Katzenberg. *The Little Mermaid* is scheduled for next November, and after that's *The Rescuers Down Under*. The intent is to release one a year, which will give us the opportunity to improve over the length of these pictures. I'm real happy that the studio is putting this much money into Disney animation.



SHORT SUBJECTS

REVIEWS OF RECENT FILMS AND BOOKS

When you think about dinosaurs, are they tall, magnificent creatures that inspire awe, respect, and a sense of wonder? Or are they cute and clumsy little twerps?

At least the question is more intriguing than say, yet another cartoon about cats and dogs. And with big-name talent involved - George Lucas and Steven Spielberg - *The Land Before Time* promises to be a great movie.

Director Don Bluth gives us a world reminiscent of Disney's "Rite of Spring" sequence from *Fantasia*; prehistoric monsters on the run from extinction, from the rapidly-changing environment and from hungry predators. We begin with some fuzzy underwater scenes that are supposed to suggest murkiness, but instead come across as out-of-focus. You may wonder if the projectionist is still trying to adjust the picture.

Then Littlefoot is born; Littlefoot, with crinkly mummy-like lips, a tongue that hangs stupidly from his mouth, and long eyelashes just ripe for mascara. All the little dinos stop eating each other long enough to pay homage to the new arrival. (They couldn't wait a few thousand years to do the same for Bambi.)

Littlefoot, of course, is a very special apatasaurus. He's the one hope for the perpetuation of the species. But first, he's got to make it to the Great Valley, or else he and his friends will starve.

As the quest begins, Bluth reminds us that racial bias is Not Good For You. A baby triceratops named Cera tells our hero, "Three-Horns do *not* play with Long Necks."

To which a girl seated behind me said, "This is just like *An American Tail*." Give her an A-plus.



Illustration by Bob Miller. Character copyright (c) 1989 Universal City Studios Inc.

Critics have pointed out that it doesn't matter if the dinos find the Great Valley, because they're all going to die anyway. Well, Bluth's dinosaurs have souls. Littlefoot's mom tells him, "I'll always be with you [in spirit]," and we later learn that he and his pals "will always be together." How nice.

Uh-oh. There turns out to be a mean Sharptooth after our heroes. Though he's a Tyrannosaurus Rex, he behaves more like a rat as he sniffs through a thorn patch. Fortunately, Mama Littlefoot manages to delay him before an earthquake conveniently breaks up the fight and, at the same time, separates the dinosaur herds.

Then the movie degenerates into Saturday-morning kiddie fare, as Littlefoot and Cera are joined by Spike, a mute but perpetually-hungry stegosaurus, and Ducky, a lively "Big Mouth" anatosaurus who practically steals the show (and who should have been the main hero). And then we meet Petrie,

the comic-relief pterodactyl who's afraid to fly, a character better suited to a Scooby-Doo cartoon.

Therein lies the movie's major flaw. It's inconsistent. Sometimes the dinosaurs of *Land* act like the fascinating creatures dinosaurs really were (as when Mama Littlefoot slowly turns her long neck to speak to her son; an impressive moment). Other times, they behave like Saturday-morning caricatures.

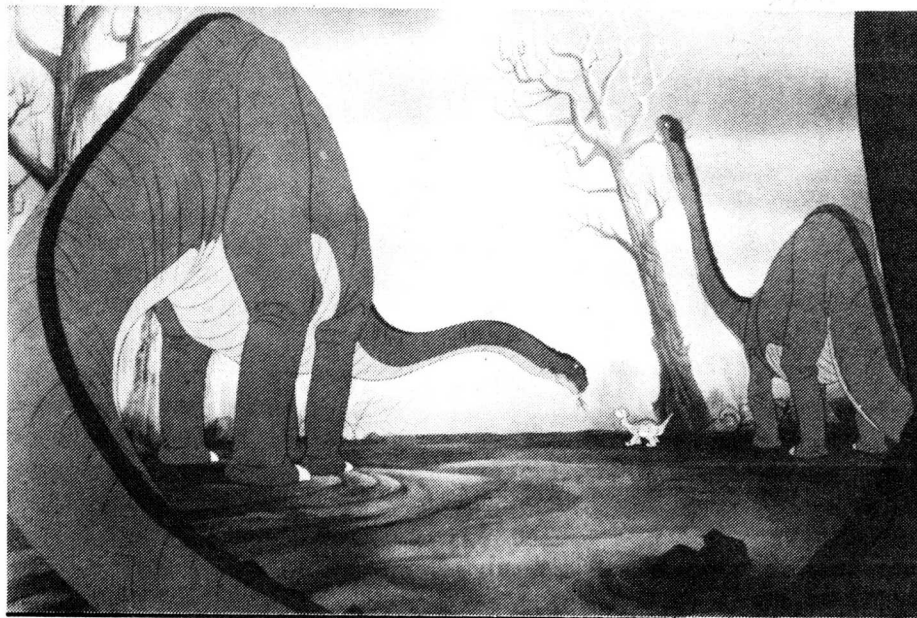
Though *Land* awes us with some wonderful animation and gorgeous backgrounds, the effect is ruined by shoddy editing and a lackluster story. Even the dinos' colors are inconsistent. Littlefoot's skin varies from brown to purple to green to yellow. Cera goes from blue to yellow to pink to purple. The colors probably change to reflect the lighting of the scene, but usually, it's the skin's tone that changes, not the color. (By contrast, Spike, Petrie, and Ducky *do* remain their natural color.)

Predictably, the movie has a character who sacrifices his life, but it turns out He Isn't Really Dead. You've seen it happen before in *Lady and the Tramp* (Trusty), *Jungle Book* (Baloo), *Peter Pan* (Tinkerbell), and *The Black Cauldron* (Gurgi). At least in *Land*, the comic relief deserves to drown.

So, *The Land Before Time* entices us with its intriguing subject matter and its big-name producers, but ultimately it fails to deliver to our expectations. As a result, it's been eclipsed (after a strong start) by that cat and dog movie. (This may bode well for Bluth; his next movie is about dogs.)

Nice try, fellows. And too bad, Littlefoot. To me, the king (that is, queen) of the dinosaurs is still Gertie.

Bob Miller



Garfield: His Nine Lives
Film Roman Productions
Produced by Phil Roman

I never used to get very excited over Garfield cartoons, but *Garfield: His Nine Lives* took me by surprise. I had looked at the book of the same title and found some rather unique stories. Initially, I was hoping that the cartoon would be an animated version of each life presented in the book, but some episodes differed from the book's sequence; most notably, the intriguing private eye tale was missing from the show. Aside from this omission, the show turned out to be a worthy effort, because of several well produced segments.

Lives one, two, eight, and nine were not all that impressive. With some small variations in setting and humor, these portions were nearly indistinguishable from a typical prime-time Garfield cartoon; that is, flat, simple animation with sight gags and utilitarian dialogue. Their only other added trait would be the unusually high amount of violent action. This can be easily overlooked, however, given the simple nature of the stories.

On the other hand, the five remaining lives held a great deal of creative promise. Life three, "In the Garden," set Garfield as a kitten and a young girl in an imaginary garden filled with fun objects. A narrator recites a mixture of poetic and prose dialogue throughout. The girl's Uncle Todd leaves her in charge of the garden, but she and her kitten are left instructions not to open a crystal box in its middle. Out of curiosity, they sneak up to it and, having reached it, decide not to open the box. Content in their decision, they prance off into the garden

to live happily forever. I found this a wonderful parallel to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, but with the spiritual perfection of mankind remaining intact.

Life four, "Court Musician," placed our hero in the role of familiar to the great composer Handel. He helps Handel compose a concerto to be performed for King George I, with the last movement being a cool jazz piece, thus thwarting the plot of a jester to embarrass Handel. The most appealing element of this short was the static animation style, highly reminiscent of *Toot, Whistle, Plunk, and Boom*. "Stunt Cat," the life that follows, gives us a very brief homage to *Krazy Kat*, complete with animation similar in style to the comic strip.

I felt that lives six and seven were the crowning achievement of the program. "Diana's Piano", an amazing piece of work, was the most outstanding segment, one that could easily stand alone as an independent short. A small girl receives a white kitten from her mother, and the girl is started on piano lessons. As the story progresses, the girl grows to late adolescence, during which time she becomes more adept at the piano as her love for her pet continues. They miss each other when the young woman goes to college, and upon her return, the now grown cat becomes jealous of the woman's fiancé. They move away, and further developments conclude with the woman playing a brilliant and flawless concert for her old friend. Upon its conclusion, the aged cat climbs onto the keyboard and passes away. We are made aware at the end of the short that the preceding story was told as a flashback

by the woman talking to her new pet kitten.

The combination of a genuinely charming story and a highly stylistic approach to the art made the piece one of the most emotionally moving and structurally satisfying examples of animation I have seen in quite some time. I was most taken by its chalk pastel palette.

In contrast to its predecessor, life seven, "Lab Animal," was a somber, fearful treatment of the story of a cat used for scientific experimentation. A cat is injected with a mysterious substance by what appear to be military scientists. He escapes the lab to avoid dissection and has various confrontations with a guard, natural forces, and a nasty dog. When he reaches safety, the substance takes effect, within moments transforming the cat into a dog. When an army search party arrives, the protagonist escapes detection by mingling with the dogs who are searching for him. This film makes a somewhat ironic statement in favor of animal rights by letting the hero suffer and later escape his fate.

Even though all the episodes were produced by different permutations of a set group of creative people at Film Roman, they obviously outdid themselves in some cases. It's almost enough to make one look forward to the next Garfield cartoon.

Mark J. Paul

Felix the Cat: the Movie

Directed by Tibor Hernadi

The world's oldest cartoon character refuses to die, despite the best attempts of today's film makers. *Felix the Cat: the Movie* is one of those examples of clever marketing triumphing over quality film making. (These days, animated films seem to have more to do with Donald Trump than Donald Duck.) This movie would have never been made were it not for the popularity and marketing possibilities of the title character. This is all the more disturbing in light of the fact that the vastly superior *The Brave Little Toaster* never did find a theatrical distributor in America.

Otto Messmer created Felix the Cat in 1918 while working for Pat Sullivan Studios. The cat became the most popular cartoon character of the silent days, and in the 50s Joe Oriolo created a version for TV. These were really two different characters. Messmer's cat solved his problems by using ingenuity and, sometimes, his tail; Oriolo's version used a magic bag of tricks instead. (In

(Continued on page 30)

A SHORT SUBJECTS SPECIAL: SATURDAY MORNING 1988-1989

BY TIMOTHY FAY

Saturday morning has, for about three generations of children, been a very special time of the week. It is the only time when network television is given over entirely to programming aimed at the younger set. As Bill Watterson's Calvin puts it, "This is what entertainment is all about... Idiots, explosives, and falling anvils."

Gone are the days, however, when Hanna and Barbera dominated the made-for-TV cartoon genre. Huck Hound, Yogi Bear, and others have been replaced, successively, by product from other studios like Filmation, Nelvana, DIC, and even Disney. This season bears the mark of yet another force in animation: graduates from the California Institute of Arts (CalArts) animation school. The school has recently developed its own strong house style, which can be seen on a couple of new Saturday morning programs. The work of this new generation of TV animators is typified by a loose, offbeat artistic style, and a sense of timing and gag writing not seen for many a Saturday morning. I'll be keeping an eye on their work in the future.

What follows are brief reviews of the new network lineup of Saturday morning cartoons. Due to the nature of television entertainment (all kinds, not just animated series), each show is rated PLUS, MINUS, or AVERAGE. Pour yourself a bowl of Crunchy Sugar Bombs -- here we go:

CBS

Raggedy Ann and Andy

I'm sure most of us are familiar with these two popular playpen perennials. Ann and Andy, along with a slow-witted camel and a persnickety panda, travel to mystical lands in search of adventure. The animation is standard, and so is the writing. Not especially good, or especially bad, Ann and Andy get rated: AVERAGE.

Superman

This is the umpteenth time the Man of Steel has come to Saturday morning, but this time around the character, and the production, have the "feel" of the recent series of live-action theatrical features. The animation, very "Japanese," is quite nice for a SatAM show but, alas, the plots are very standard and unimaginative. The "super" man gets a very AVERAGE rating.

Garfield and Friends

Jim Davis' popular "fat cat," along with his "friends" from *U.S. Acres*, debut on Saturday morning with this series from Film Roman, producer of most of the prime time *Garfield* TV specials. The writing is generally on a par with what one finds in the newspaper strip, which makes *Garfield and Friends* one of the few truly funny new shows on Saturday morning. Lorenzo Music once again lends his chords to the big orange feline, and *Garfield* garners a big PLUS.

NBC

ALF and Alfatales Hour

Last season, NBC's popular live-action series *ALF* was translated into an animated series for SatAM. The premise of the original series was about a wise-cracking, furry Alien Life Form (ALF, also known as Gordon Shumway), the last survivor of his planet, who's "doin' time on Planet Earth" with an average suburban family. Most of ALF's humor derives from this premise and the predicaments that ALF manages to get his human "family" into. The animated *ALF* takes place on his home planet, years before he left for Earth. I'm not a big fan of the live-action series, but, without the situation on which most of the original ALF humor is based, I found the animated series even less appealing. Most of the stories for last year's animated *ALF* were little more than standard sitcom plots, and the few stories that were based on "Melmagian" situations weren't much better. Now comes *Alfatales*, which is even further removed: Gordon, Rhonda, and the other Melmac denizens give their interpretations of popular Earth fairy tales and legends. This idea probably wouldn't work, except for the clever use of characters, the wry humor, and the satirical twists that occasionally shine through. It is enough to make *Alfatales* entertaining.

If nothing else, the *ALF and Alfatales Hour* has the best opening credits of any Satmorn cartoon series. Overall, the *ALF* hour gets an AVERAGE rating, but *Alfatales* squeaks by with a PLUS.

The Completely Mental Misadventures of Ed Grimley

This is one of those shows that leaves one asking, "What were they thinking?"

"...A new program...that has restored my faith in the medium." The New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh.
Copyright (c) 1989 The Walt Disney Company.



Or maybe, "What - were they thinking?" Martin Short's nerdish character from *SCTV* and *Saturday Night Live* becomes a cartoon character, but one wonders why it wasn't done live-action, ala *Pee-Wee's Playhouse*. There's even a live-action sequence in each show, featuring Count Floyd (played by fellow *SCTV* veteran Joe Flaherty). Worse still, *Ed Grimley* is simply not funny. Apparently, what works as a sketch on late-night TV doesn't work as a half-hour on Saturday morning. Rating: MINUS.

ABC

A Pup Named Scooby-Doo

Once again, the sleuthing hound and friends are back, only this time they're given the "kid" treatment (e.g., *The Flintstone Kids*, *Muppet Babies*). Scoob has also moved to another animation studio, Wang Films, and this is one of the series where one can see the work of the CalArts graduates. Kids who once might have watched the original *Scooby-Doo* are now writing and drawing him for yet another generation of kids. The "mysteries" are not bad, and I like the idea of involving the viewer in guessing who the perpetrator of this week's fiendish crime might be. Rating: AVERAGE.

Slimer & the Real Ghostbusters

The popularity of the gluttonous green ghost has rated him an extra half-hour this season. The first and last fifteen minutes of each hour-long segment of this show are devoted to *Slimer*, while the middle half-hour repeats a *Ghostbusters* episode from previous seasons. The "Slimer" segments feature more work by CalArts alumni, and are also funny and have an interesting "look," animation-wise. Unfortunately, these episodes are teamed with older, "Japanese" episodes of *The Real Ghostbusters*, and the stylistic change is quite jarring. The "spud" and his pals rate an AVERAGE.

Beany and Cecil

I can still remember the fun and excitement I felt waiting to see "A Bob Clampett Cartoo-oon!" during the original *Beany and Cecil*'s network and syndication runs. So I was very excited to hear that new episodes were coming to television in the Fall of 1988. Alas, my anticipation was soon replaced with bitter disappointment.

The first ominous development came before the new *Beany and Cecil* premiered: It was announced that DIC

"...One of the worst Saturday Morning series ever produced." Beany and Cecil. Copyright (c) 1989 Bob Clampett Productions, Inc.



would be doing the series, to be produced by John Kricfalusi, one of the "geniuses" behind *Mighty Mouse: the New Adventures*. I was concerned because DIC's track record on animated series, network and syndicated, was variable at best. I'm also apparently one of the few animation fans who wasn't exactly bowled over by Bakshi's new *Mighty Mouse* series. So I was a little bit wary of the news that one of the people responsible for the new *Mighty Mouse* would be in charge of reviving an old childhood favorite.

Still hopeful, I tuned in the first week - and now I almost wish I hadn't. What the old *Beany and Cecil* may have lacked in animation, it certainly made up in clever design and style. By contrast, the new *Beany and Cecil* looked stilted and poorly-drawn. In fact, it looked more like Bakshi's *Mighty Mouse* than Clampett's *Sea-Sick Sea Serpent*.

What I, and other Clampett aficionados, probably liked best about the old series was Clampett's inimitable sense of humor, characterized by the outrageous parody and horrible puns that were packed into each episode. None of this was present in the new series. The new series was flat, unfunny, and poorly directed; the very antithesis of the original. The writers and animators seemed preoccupied with copying the "wacky" humor and stylistic quirks of the *New Mighty Mouse* than in coming up with witty and enjoyable material. When old episodes were inserted into the series toward the end of its very limited run, it only served to show how much better they were than DIC's version. Overall, I'd have to say that the new *Beany and Cecil* was one of the worst Saturday morning series ever produced. The new *Beany and Cecil* was canceled after only four weeks, making it one of the shortest-lived SatAM series, as well. Rating: MINUS.

The New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh

Many of us have bemoaned the lack of quality and originality which is symptomatic of TV kidvid fare (see above). Well, I'm pleased to announce that a new program has appeared that has restored my hope for the medium.

Disney's *The New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh*, while taking some liberties with A.A. Milne's basic concepts, is still more or less true to the characters of Pooh, Piglet, Rabbit, Tigger, Owl, Eeyore, and the rest of the gang from the Hundred Acre Wood. The animation is on a par with Disney TV's previous Saturday Morning efforts (*Wuzzles* and *Gummi Bears*), and definitely better than *DuckTales* (especially some of the later episodes of that series).

But what sets *Winnie the Pooh* apart from its current network and syndicated rivals is the quality of its scripts and story ideas. Most of the episodes viewed have been witty, lively, and imaginative. Even the occasional song, a bane to most productions, is usually pulled off well.

Most episodes feature Pooh and the other animals on "adventures," but Christopher Robin occasionally joins in, and his relationship to the magical stuffed animals is reminiscent of Bill Watterson's *Calvin and Hobbes* (and often just as funny). One episode in particular, "Find Her, Keep Her," is one of the most touching installments of an animated series I've ever seen on U. S. television. Rabbit rescues and raises an orphaned bird named Kessie, but Rabbit becomes too fond of her, and problems arise when it's time for Kessie to fly south for the winter. The episode was handled with a charm and sensitivity one rarely sees on television. I wish I were on one of those Emmy Award committees, because this episode would certainly get my vote. Rating: PLUS!

SHORT SUBJECTS

(Continued from page 27)

between, in the mid 30's, three sound cartoons were produced by the Van Beuren Studio but the distributor, RKO dropped the studio in favor of Disney.)

The TV version, however, did develop a following, and Joe's son Don got involved with various phases of the production. In 1985, Joe and Don began working on the idea of getting a Felix feature film on the screen. When Joe died in 1986, Don took over the production, getting backing from producer Christian Scheider and hiring Hungarian director Tibor Hernadi (*Time Masters*) to oversee the animation in Europe.

The story involves a place called Oriana, a peaceful kingdom in another dimension. The evil Duke of Zill is in the process of taking over the Kingdom through the use of an army of robots. Oriana's princess sends a holographic image to our dimension (ours is the dimension with talking cats). Felix intercepts the message and enters Oriana followed by the Professor and Poindexter, who have been studying Felix to learn the secrets of his magic bag of tricks. (The parallels to *Star Wars* are obvious; it's sad that none of the excitement or continuity of that film translate to this one.)

The producers knew that the film was in trouble, so at the last minute they added a computer-animated three dimensional Felix head at the film's beginning to try to explain the story. Naturally, a computer rendering of Felix's face to introduce a cel animated feature only makes the viewer more confused. The film is peppered with terrible puns in an attempt to inject humor in a humorless film. Felix says "That Duke of Zill has me in a real pickle, Zill pickle...get it?"

The animation fluctuates from good to fair; there are some interesting settings and creatures, but nothing adds up to anything watchable. The voice performances make most Saturday morning cartoons sound like the Royal Shakespeare Company. In the TV version of Felix, Oriolo had legendary voice talent Jack Mercer read his lines *very slowly*, because the five minute scripts had to be padded out to seven minutes. Sadly, the same stilted style of delivery has been retained for the feature. And the lip-sync is so bad that many viewers ask if the film had originally been made in Hungarian and dubbed in English. Even though the original track was in English it looked out of sync, because the bad puns were

added later to punch up the film.

The film premiered at the recent L.A. Animation Celebration mainly because of the promotability of its star. It's sad to think that the story, or character development was of little consideration for the film makers. The one positive sign is that so far no American distributors have picked up the film. (It's currently being distributed in Europe and Asia) If the film were to get distributed it could hurt the general audience perception of animation in general, unfair as that might be. All the good work done by *Roger Rabbit* could be undone by a bad film like this one.

Steve Segal

The 21st International Tournee of Animation

Produced by Terry Thoren

My wife is an artist, so we often get into discussions about the purpose and nature of art. Should it be merely decorative? Should it invoke an emotion? Should it tell a story?

With animation, there is always that feeling that "telling a story" is the main criterion. Like the novel and other narrative works of art, film seems to be often judged by that guideline. But why shouldn't animation simply exist to invoke a mood or to entertain without a storyline? A picture come to life, for instance.

The recent *21st Tournee* collection is primarily story based, which is a good thing. Two hours of non-narrative animation can get tiring: witness the excellent-in-parts *Fantasia*. The most important thing is that a visual film cannot be boring. (Most films that do not attempt to tell a story accomplish this through humor.)

Georges Schwizgebel's *78 Tours* falls into that non-narrative "art" category. There is no plot, but there is some nice animation, using a variety of styles. I enjoyed it, but would have grown tired had it been any longer than its four minutes. *Pas a Deux*, by Monique Renault and Gerrit van Dijk, held my attention for much longer because of its humor. (I really enjoyed the scenes with the Pope breakdancing.) And *Candy Jam*, like *Anijam* before it, consists of various animators each contributing a section, this time using real candy and either pixillating it or attaching "real" animation to it. Enjoyable, but no masterpiece. And no plot.

Paul Driessen, whom I generally like, is getting much too weird for me. I can't figure out if his new work is nar-

rative or non-narrative. There are so many subplots and side bits and strange things going on that I just get lost. *The Writer* actually became boring!

There was a very nice collection of Richard Williams commercials which went by much too quickly. When will they release a Williams show, featuring his best commercials, titles, and *A Christmas Carol*?

Neville Astley's *Living in a Mobile Home* had some wonderfully wacky British humor but terrible sound, so that many of the jokes were lost; Cordell Baker's Academy Award nominee *The Cat Came Back* was typical National Film Board of Canada stuff (which means very good and very funny); and Craig Bartlett's *Arnold Escapes from Church* could have easily been one of his Penny cartoons from *Pee-Wee's Playhouse*. All worth watching, but nothing to write home about.

The newest Augusta clay animation short, *Augusta Kneading*, had me thinking throughout of Mel Brooks's comments in *The Critic*: "The guy who made this could have done something productive. Could have made a shoe."

The Man Who Planted Trees, the 1987 Academy Award winner, was more entertaining than Frederic Back's last film, *Crac*, but I still wasn't overly impressed. Using abstract drawings of trees to describe how beautiful trees are is like trying to appreciate music by reading a book about it. I don't mean to imply that an artist should never produce art when the real thing exists. I would hope that the artist would have something to say about the subject of the art. But in *Trees*, the artist wanted to fill us with the wonder and the beauty of trees but did not accomplish his goal. If he had another purpose in mind, I missed it. (I think that I shall never see a cartoon as lovely as a tree.)

My favorite film was the Academy Award nominee *Technological Threat*, directed by Bill Kroyer. In this hilarious film, computer animation clashes head-on with traditional cel animation - and loses (for now). An office full of Tex Avery wolves gets slowly replaced by computer animated robots who do the work ten times faster and better. The blending of the two styles works wonderfully, as the wolf is all stretch-and-squash takes as compared to his more stilted adversary. A metaphor for computerization of our society or for current animation techniques? Doesn't matter -

(Continued on page 37)

FLIPBOOKS

A Book Column by David Bastian

MICKEY, SHAMUS, & LEN: THREE BOOKS

The Disney Studio Story

By Richard Hollis and Brian Sibley
Crown; \$40.00

I imagine it went something like this:

Publisher: "The Disney Studio Story?"

Hollis and Sibley: "Yeah. You know, like *The MGM Story*, *The RKO Story*, *The Warner Brothers Story*, *The UA Story*! Now there'll be *The Disney Studio Story*!"

Publisher: "Hmm. Well, okay."

I hate to be the bearer of bad news to the person who penned the jacket notes for this book, calling it "the first in-depth study of the art, business, and output of the Walt Disney Company," but it will have to share space on my shelf with the 30+ books on Disney that have preceded it. Most of you gentle readers have a lot of these books as well, and will resent having to traipse through the same old quips and quotes to get to what few new tidbits of information this book has to offer.

You would think they would have long ago run out of gimmicks with which to package the artwork in the Disney vault (which surely is exhausted as of now). But no. The same old stills are all there in all their battleworn splendor, and the price to see them has not gone down.

In places, I'd swear that the folks at Crown were going through Harper &

Row's garbage one day and came across the manuscript for last year's *Encyclopedia of Walt Disney's Animated Characters* (which is exactly the same size), and said "Hey, we can use this! We'll just cut it up and rearrange the films year-by-year instead of character-by-character!"

What's next? Species-by-species? (Chapter one: mice. Chapter two: ducks. Chapter three: everything else.) Or perhaps by director? (Chapter one: Robert Stevenson. Chapter two: everyone else.) Or by voice artist? (Chapter one: Phil Harris. Chapter two: everyone else.)

At least the aforementioned *Encyclopedia* sported a fresh supply of artwork never published before. Minus that, and minus Frank and Ollie's insiders' view, Leonard Maltin's analytical skills, and even Richard Schickel's insight, Hollis and Sibley offer us...just the facts...again.

Ironically, the one interesting aspect that is revealed lies in the section detailing all of the projects the studio has unveiled since Walt's death in order to forsake his vision for *The Color of Money*: rushed and mediocre animation; Danny Devito films; *Mickey Mouse Disco*; *Captain Eo*; Touchstone Pictures that look like they could have been made by any rival studio and will certainly generate none of the longterm earnings of the Disney classics; and (the ugliest sin) TV cartoon series! I'm

waiting for the Bette Midler ride at Disneyland!

This depressing note is the only new light shed on an otherwise tired subject in this book. My advice is to wait until six months from now and then start checking the discount bins among *The MGM Story* and *The UA Story*, where this ripoff is sure to reside by then.

Animation from Script to Screen

By Shamus Culhane
St. Martin's Press; \$17.95

Shamus Culhane is like the uncle who used to help you build model airplanes. You weren't always sure you understood his instructions; you were self-conscious around him, afraid you wouldn't measure up; and it seemed as if he could sense your lack of self-confidence and grew impatient with it. Still, there was something magical about your relationship because the two of you were on a journey together.

Animation from Script to Screen is both frustrating and enlightening. The title itself suggests that after thorough digestion of the book in its entirety, the reader will be privy to the secrets of creating his own animated film.

Well, yes and no. Anyone who is new to the medium of animation and its inherent complexity will be put off of by the book's greatest shortcoming - its tendency to be discursive. The book seems to be searching for an identity, as it switches back and forth between

being a "how to" book and a "how they do it" book.

Indeed, the question is quickly raised as to what audience the book is aimed at. If you are a professional in the position of putting together your own animation studio and making a competitive bid on a commercial project (and Shamus spends most of his pages addressing this type), then you are obviously so experienced and well-connected that you won't think you need this book (although you could probably learn something from it). If you are an animation enthusiast who has thought about filming some experiments of your own in your basement, and are searching for a mentor, you will no doubt become tired during the three chapters on the function of the studio director and his paternal role towards his underlings.

As a college text, the book is equally unfulfilling. The chapter on writing wastes time by warning us about narrow-minded advertising executives and the need to sell one's work through an agent, while the challenge of breaking down actual animation scripts to investigate their strengths and weaknesses is left to the reader to tackle on his own (Regardless of college, Shamus urges the reader to devote at least fifteen hours

a week to his course of study.)

Taken by itself, it is an uneven way to become introduced to the technique of animation. The author glosses over many topics, while dwelling for long stretches on others. But Shamus doesn't intend the book to speak alone. Indeed, the very first chapter is a bibliography of what he feels to be necessary books to round out an animator's education.

In addition to the obvious recommendations, such as Preston Blair's *Animation*, Shamus is sold on Kimon Nicolaides's *The Natural Way to Draw* and Betty Edwards's *Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain*, two books whose philosophies of creative thought he continues to return to throughout the course of the book, with examples of their applications in practically every phase of animation production. Those who never accepted the medium of animation as a "fine art" because its complexity renders spontaneity impossible will be turned on their heels by Shamus's assurance that by separating the creative work (right brain) from the technical chores (left brain), a greater degree of success at each will be possible.

(Curiously, two books remain unmentioned in Shamus's bibliography: Kit Laybourne's *The Animation Book* and

Zoran Perisic's *The Animation Stand*, both of which elaborate on technical aspects of animation camerawork, and which will come in handy to supplement the sections in which Shamus talks in shorthand.)

As we have already seen in *Talking Animals and Other People*, Shamus writes like he is ready for a fight, as if our doubting of his word places his experience and expertise in question. His irascibility, which made his memoirs so endearing, seems out of place in an instructional book, which (if successful) will encourage a student, not defeat him. When discussing the inevitable stage of rewriting a script, Shamus writes that "the professional is willing to change material when it is expedient to do so. That doesn't mean that you have to be a Milquetoast about it. Defend your reasons for writing what you did, but realize that if your arguments do not sway your agent, you would be wise to do it over, and do it without sulking." The reader will have to decide for himself if he is put off by Shamus's gruffness.

At times, it seems as though Shamus is goading us along more than encouraging us. Often, when he gets on a roll, he can pretty much sabotage his own lecture by angering himself into an entire page of discourse ranging in tone from self-righteous to condescending. Is he really advising us to seriously study *Fritz the Cat* and *Raggedy Ann and Andy* for their weaknesses, or is he merely taking the opportunity to express his opinions?

Fortunately, his opinions are based on years of first-hand experience, and he employs this knowledge in many enjoyable anecdotes to drive his points home. On page 76, he recounts how the fox in *Pinocchio* needed to be redesigned, but that the need did not make itself apparent until animation of him had been filmed. Only when the fox moved was it clear that his nose needed to be shortened. On page 211, Shamus reminisces with a poet's eye on how animator Bill Roberts reminded him of van Gogh: "They both drew painfully; theirs was no God-given facility, but it was scrupulously honest. I equate some of van Gogh's drawings of the potato eaters with Bill Roberts' animation. Awkward, searching for truth, they suffered in the cause of honesty."

Observations like this awaken my excitement for animation like no primer has done before. Likewise, the treatise

From Animation from Script to Screen. Copyright (c) 1989 Shamus Culhane.



on how exhilarating it can feel to express oneself artistically, which begins on the bottom of page 147 and doesn't let up until two pages later, should be read and relished by even the most experienced (read burnt-out) professional.

In my opinion, the book best serves those who have already gotten their feet wet by animating their own films, and are seeking some suggestions on how to improve their work (I'm not sure if I would have heeded his advice before I had specific problems to plug his solutions into.)

For such a person, chapter fourteen, "Animating," is a godsend! The longest chapter in the book, it is also the most thorough. Beginning as a peptalk that any animator could adopt as his pledge of allegiance, it soon wings into an onslaught of invaluable drawing tips. If you were to take notes on this chapter you would soon wind up copying its entire sixty pages! It's all meat, and it clearly indicates the area for which Shamus has the most passion. I only wish the other chapters, like the the whirlwind explanation of artwork photography, were organized as lovingly.

Shamus's book doesn't spoonfeed you a lot of basic information, but it isn't meant to. He is hoping that with the aid of his book you will 1) hone the self-motivation, the perseverance, the obsession which is mandatory for nurturing the talent necessary for the field of animation; 2) surround yourself with the resources (books, videotapes, artwork, life experiences) that will broaden these talents; and 3) encourage you to see rather than look, so you "will become a thoughtful artist." And in doing so, he may have bridged the gap between reader and studio, creating the first "how you can do it like they do it" book.

Now, as I try to organize the animated film which I myself am feverishly trying to complete, and which seems to grow more insurmountable with each day, I find myself taking much of Shamus's advice. But more importantly, I feel his spirit investing me with the confidence that I can unscramble the mess I have created for myself and steer it to completion. No book has ever tried to do that before. And few teachers succeed.

Figures of Motion: Len Lye/Selected Writings

Edited by Wystrand Curnow and Roger

Horrocks

Auckland University Press; \$16.50

The name of Len Lye (1901-1980) should be familiar to everyone who owns a copy of *Experimental Animation*. A painter, sculptor, filmmaker, and writer, Lye expressed the desire to convey both motion and the effect that a motion has on the artist and spectator.

He made traditionally-drawn animated films, such as *Tusalava* (1929), which was inspired by aboriginal tribal dance; puppet films (*The Birth of the Robot* (1936)); documentaries (*Cameraman at War* (1943)); as well as numerous "direct-drawn" films (images scratched or hand-drawn directly on 35mm footage), created in an attempt to "compose motion on film."

For those of us who are amazed by Norman McLaren's ability to infuse life into a hen composed of only two or three lines, Lye's *Particles in Space* (1979), in which a swarm of mere scratchmarks seem to live and breath, is positively flooring. (Witness, I just caught myself using the anthropomorphic term "swarm" to describe scratches!)

Like McLaren, or perhaps even more than McLaren, Lye wanted to do something different with animation than convey traditional narratives. But whereas McLaren was more interested in recording the change that occurs between each drawing or frame, Lye imagined films in which the movement of an object, and not the object itself, was recorded. He emphasized that art should be concerned with neither "realistic imagery" nor "social problems of living." Or, to use Lye's almost free-verse prose (which preceded Kerouac by twenty years), "I like mind to portray mind, not period."

In the 1930s, when the new color-separation film stocks with their three matrices were affording filmmakers a greater degree of realism, Lye saw the process as a way "to present objects in grades of abstraction." *Rainbow Dance* (1936) and *Trade Tattoo* (1937) prefigure the video effects of the MTV set of forty years. By presenting the human figure in *Musical Poster* (1940) as a large green silhouette, Lye wished to emphasize the sensational stimuli in the colors of pictorial art, rather than their application to a realistic form. Disney is said to have based his idea to animate *Fantasia's* "Toccata and Fugue" sequence with abstract images on Lye's *Colour Box* (1935).

Lye's kinetic sculptures utilized the phenomenon of persistence of vision to isolate the pattern of an entire movement as a design in itself, akin to Alexander Alexeieff and Claire Parker's photography of "illusory solids". To quote Lye, "When the mind if movement-conscious it is conscious of nothing else; movement, in fact, is something that precedes what is strictly called consciousness, as physical precedes mental."

Lye saw his art as an attempt to thwart the "dags on the mind" or "mental stultification" imposed by the interference of traditional literary references. To do this one needed to distinguish between what Lye termed the "old brain" and the "new brain" (paralleling the brain's right and left sides respectively), and try to tap into the "old brain."

Though they will probably never be recommended as companion volumes anywhere, Lye's book shares many of the same theories as Shamus Culhane's *Animation from Script to Screen*. In addition to encouraging the reader to tap into the creative side of the brain, Lye reminisces about his childhood days, when he would devote an entire day to concentrating on the sounds that everything makes. The next day would be "colour day," and the day after that "weight day." This nourishing of a sensitivity to surroundings which is so necessary for an artist is exactly what Culhane discusses in the "Learning to See" section of his book.

Figures of Motion contains a lengthy introduction that serves as a biography of Lye, fourteen pages of color and black-and-white illustrations of his work, and examples of Lye's writing on his theory of filmmaking and sculpture, his recollections of his youth in New Zealand, and his poetry and experimental writings. Anyone who is seriously studying the aesthetics of animation will find this book a thrilling collection of ideas and thoughts that are even more timely today as the bloated film industry continues to turn its back on the medium's endless creative potential. In his own view, Lye saw both animation and kinetic sculpture as media left virtually untapped. Why has no one picked up where Lye left off?

(Copies of *Figures of Motion* may be obtained by sending \$16.50 + \$3.40 for postage to Cecile Starr, 50 West 96th St., New York, NY 10025.)



KOKO KOMMENTS

A FLEISCHER STUDIOS COLUMN BY G. MICHAEL DOBBS

SELECTIONS FROM KOKO'S MAILBAG

First, a tip of the clown hat to all of the *Animato* readers who have written such positive letters regarding my recent columns. Thanks! In this edition of "Koko Komments," I'd like to share some of this mail.

Dear Michael,

My comic shop only sporadically gets *Animato* and other publications dealing with animation, although they are getting better at it. In the most recent issue of *Animato* you mentioned the authorized release of the Fleischer Superman cartoons. I too have heard rumors and wonder if you have any more substantiation of these rumors. I've held off buying these cartoons in their various public domain forms for this very reason. Even though some of the various ads in the various mags all tout their copies as being made from the very best copies available! (Couldn't have been better if Max himself had handled the transfer.) Yeah, right! Gimme a break...

Danny Nader,
Cincinnati, Ohio

Well, Danny, as far as I know Warner Communications has not yet decided to

release all of the Fleischer/Famous Superman shorts. The negatives are at UCLA, but the public domain status of the material is undoubtedly holding back their release. Warners may be reluctant to invest the money in transferring material to which they do not hold the copyright.

To the best of my knowledge, though, someone on the west coast got access to these negatives and transferred them to video. I first saw nostalgia maven Jim Harmon advertise in *The Big Reel* how he had the "best" Superman tapes around. I called him to try to find out what the story was behind the tapes, but he was awfully cagey. All he would say is his tape was not from the same old tired dupes.

Harmon advertised these tapes for a while at \$80.00, and then at \$50.00 for all 17 shorts, and then stopped advertising them at all. What happened is anyone's guess. I didn't buy them simply because he told me he was going to hold my money until he received enough orders to make producing the tapes worthwhile!

I do know the producer of the terrible television birthday salute to Superman

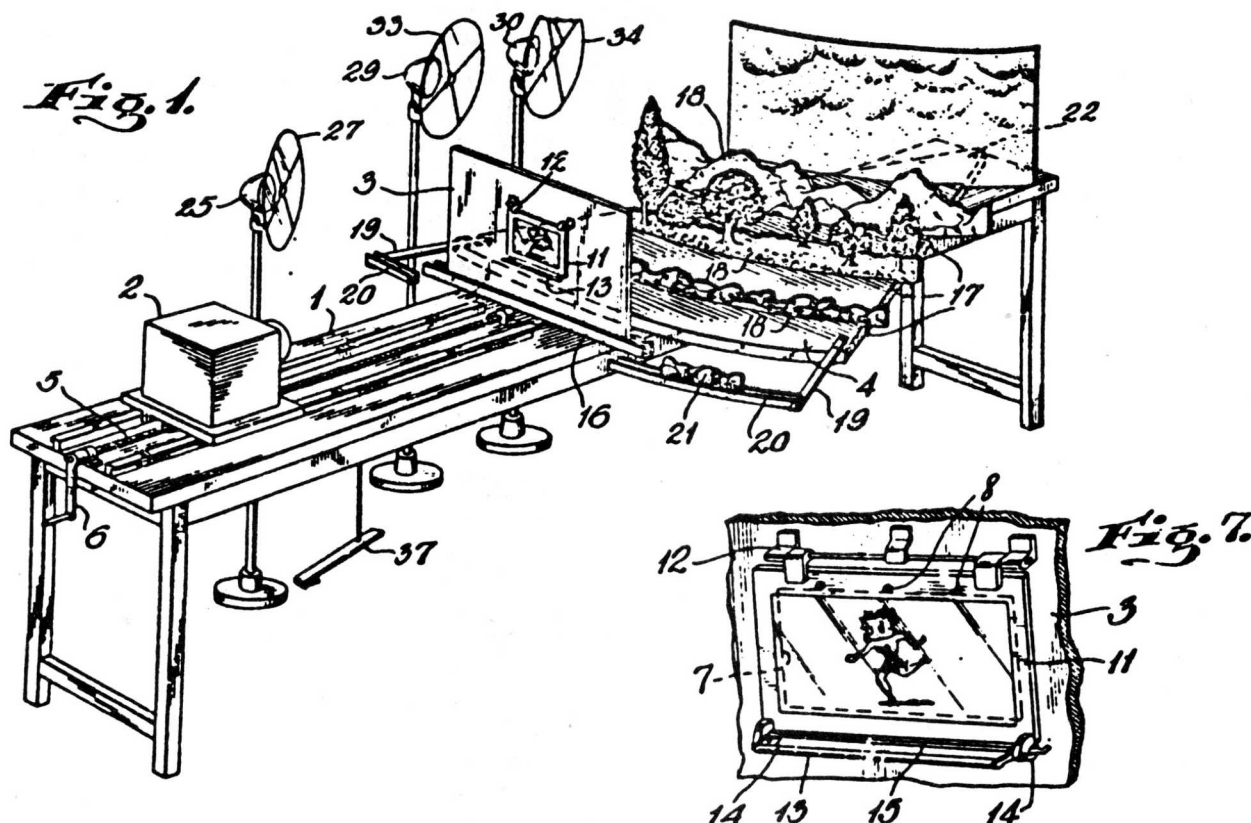
did make video transfers of the UCLA negatives to use in that special. Why Warners didn't take his one-inch video master tape and use that for their VHS tape, I don't know. They could protect their investment through encoding.

As a footnote, serial fans would be interested to know that DC also controls the rights to the two Superman serials starring Kirk Alyn, and the company was stymied when its parent company, Warner Communications, decided to release the two productions. It seems DC couldn't find its print of the second serial in its warehouse and had to turn to Kirk Alyn who happened to have a print. Kirk, wanted more money than Warners was willing to pay for the use of the print, but negotiations were finally successful!

Dear Michael,

I was wondering if you would talk about the 3D setbacks the Fleischers used. Was this technique used by other studios? I haven't seen it used in cartoons today, so is it too expensive to use now?

Bob Miller,
Glendale CA



Illustrations from the patent application for Fleischer's three-dimensional backdrop system.

There have been two major ways to inject the illusion of depth into cartoons (until the recent use of polarized prints). The dominant technique has been the multiplane camera, developed largely by the Walt Disney studio. The multiplane camera allows the filmmakers to achieve the illusion of three dimensions by photographing the action cel at a distance from the foreground and background cels.

One of my theories about Max Fleischer is he was very literal-minded, and his method of adding three dimensions to cartoons reflects this belief. You want three dimensions, you use a three-dimensional model as your background!

The Fleischer studio built a three-dimensional model to act as the background. The model was mounted on a turntable and the cels were photographed in front of the model. As you can imagine, one of the big problems in this set-up was properly lighting the modelled background without overexposing the cel.

To achieve the three-dimensional effect, the cartoon characters on the cel had to appear to be "in" the model. To do so, the turntable and the model was turned slightly with each cel to give the cel "movement" in relation to the model.

The Fleischer 3D method was developed by 1933, when Max filed the patent papers, and was patented in 1936. By that time, the studio was using the process fairly regularly in its shorts, although they did not make a single cartoon completely in this process. I'm sure cost factors were a factor, and many of the cartoons with the 3D effect use it in just one or two scenes.

The effect was always at least interesting, and, if used properly within a story, the 3D worked very well. My lone criticism is the apparent arbitrary inclusion of a 3D sequence in some cartoons. The novelty of the effect wears off quickly if there is no dramatic reason for it.

For me, the effect is used perfectly in two of the Popeye specials, *Popeye the*

Sailor Meets Sinbad the Sailor and *Popeye Meets Ali Baba and his Forty Thieves*. The fabulous model of Sinbad's island is wonderfully conceived, as is the treasure-laden wagon at the conclusion of *The Forty Thieves*.

The 3D effect could also be very striking in black and white. One of my favorite examples of black and white 3D is in *Betty Boop and the Little King*, especially when the Little King sneaks out of the opera house to see Betty perform.

One only wishes Max had used this kind of effect in the Superman cartoons, but by the early forties the studio had abandoned its use. The studio did use a very impressive model of Manhattan in its opening credit sequence of *Mr. Bug Goes to Town*, but did not photograph cels with it.

G. Michael Dobbs is the official biographer of Max Fleischer, and loves to hear from animation fans. He can be reached at 24 Hampden Street, Indian Orchard, MA 01151.

JIM KORKIS'S ANIMATION ANECDOTES

A Full Circle

Filmation, which recently was sold to the French company L'Oreal, has undergone several drastic staff cutbacks in recent years. At the time of one of them, Lou Scheimer, the studio's head honcho, stated the following: "What's happened to us is a microcosm of what's happened to industry in America. In the short term, it may be very difficult to produce animation entirely in this country. I see one hopeful sign. You can't afford to do it in Japan these days, either. The Japanese are subcontracting work to the Koreans - who are subcontracting it to Taiwan, the Philippines, mainland China, and Malaysia. I'm eagerly awaiting the day a Japanese animation studio comes to ask us whether we would be willing to accept subcontracted work from them."

Funny as a Crutch

One of the first Donald Duck cartoons was *Modern Inventions*, directed by Jack King and released in 1937. (Donald had previously been showcased without Mickey Mouse in 1936 in *Donald and Pluto* and *Don Donald*, both directed by Ben Sharpsteen.) The late Clarence Nash, the original voice for Donald, remembered that cartoon vividly. "I sat in on some of the story meetings and made some suggestions based on all the things I discovered I could make Donald do," remembered Nash in an interview. "So they put in a sequence where Donald gets in the mechanical baby carriage and puts a coin in the slot and it sings 'Rock a Bye Baby' and he begins to squawk. I think this was the cartoon where the man in Canada laughed so hard he left his crutches behind when he left the theater."

A Tale of a Tail

Rolf Harris, the popular Australian comedian, loves cartoons, but he loves spotting mistakes even more. "I've just been looking through a Tom and Jerry called *Muscle Beach* made about thirty years ago and its amazing what happens to the tails. They keep vanishing. In some shots they've got them - seconds later they've disappeared." Harris hosts a BBC show called *Cartoon Time* which shows some of the classics of animation, and he encourages his viewers to spot similar mistakes.

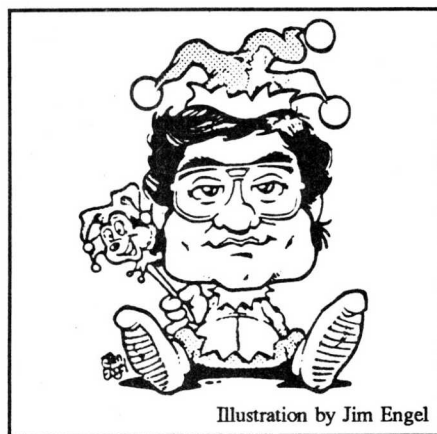


Illustration by Jim Engel

The Musical Flintstones

The Screaming Blue Messiahs, a punk/new wave rock group, released a single titled "I Wanna be a Flintstone." MTV ran a video of the song, which featured many clips from the Hanna-Barbera cartoon series intercut with scenes of the group playing "Bedrock-style" stone-age instruments. The 12" extended version of the song uses dialogue from the "Weirdly Gruesome" episode of the show. (Another rock group, the Dicks, did a song called "Bowling with Bedrock Barney." Sting sang the Flintstones theme in the documentary *Bring*

on the Night, and John Candy led a busload of people in a chorus of the theme in the film *Planes, Trains, and Automobiles*.)

As for the live-action *Flintstones* movie, Jim Belushi has stated that he loves the script and is ready to play Fred whenever the production company is ready to film.

Chuck Jones's Complaint

"There's a dreadful paucity of ideas on Saturday morning TV that really drives me nuts," says animation legend Chuck Jones. "I really object to the idea in those Saturday morning shows that the only way we can solve problems is in groups. Our whole history has evolved from individuals, not from group behavior."

Was Peter Oswald's Cousin?

Beatrix Potter is well known for her delightful and popular children's books, especially her first, *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*. In 1936, Disney considered animating that character, but Potter was reluctant. "There is a scheme to film Peter Rabbit," she wrote. "I am not very hopeful about the result. They propose to use cartoons; it seems that a succession of figures can be joggled together to give an impression of motion. I don't think the pictures would be satisfactory without the landscape backgrounds, and I doubt if the backgrounds would be satisfactory on a larger scale and without colour. I think children with masks, acting the stories against a natural background would give more satisfaction."

Unknown Animator

Some fans know that Bob Wood was an

editor of the Lev Gleason line of comics. Along with Charles Biro, he was in charge of the original Daredevil, Crimebuster, and many others. However, few folks know that at the age of seventeen, he went to New York to work on Pop-eye and Betty Boop cartoons for Max Fleischer, and when that didn't work out, went back to Boston where he tried to open his own animation studio. This also didn't work out, and he drifted into comics in the forties.

Stan Lee on Animation

For the past few years, comic-book writer Stan Lee has been involved with Marvel Productions, which produced Saturday-morning cartoons which featured some of the popular Marvel comic characters that Lee helped create. This is not the first time that Marvel characters have been animated. At a 1967 comic convention in New York, Lee was asked about his reaction to the Grantray-Lawrence and Hanna-Barbera interpretations

of Spiderman, the Fantastic Four, and other characters. "We are having trouble with the TV shows. TV feels that any animated cartoon is automatically for the six year old age group and thus they insist on strict simplicity. This immediately eliminates everything that is Marvel. We just gave up on them, and since then, they have gone off on their own to do all new stories, etc. Personally, I was very dissatisfied with the way our heroes were handled."

Nun Fun

Monica Baldwin, a Catholic nun, spent thirty years totally secluded in a convent. In her book *I Leap Over the Wall*, published in 1950, she described her first visit to a movie theater, in the early 1940s, after those years of seclusion. "Finally, a 'Donald Duck' of the most shattering variety. In all my life I had never dreamed of such lurid colours, undreamed-of situations, or amazing technique. People ought not to be taken to

see their first Disney film without suitable preparation. The shock is too overwhelming. I sat there with my tongue cleaving to my dried-up palate, and my eyes popping out of my head."

Daffy's Daddy

Chuck Jones has stated that developing a popular cartoon character isn't such a mysterious process. It merely involves the understanding of the inner workings of ordinary human beings. "I had no trouble finding Daffy [Duck], because everyone is avaricious and wants the best of everything, the way Daffy does. Daffy rushes in and at the same time fears to tread. He never succeeds, but if he wants something, he wants it all. I'm most at home with Daffy for that reason. I wish I could be as confident as he is. I'm a little ashamed of the Daffy in me. The Coyote, to me, has always been a hero. He keeps trying. He doesn't win, but it takes a lot of guts to keep trying," says Jones.

SHORT SUBJECTS

(Continued from page 30)

the whole thing is just fun and silly, and there's nothing wrong with that.

In total, an excellent show with few slow spots (especially if you go to the lobby during the Augusta cartoon). And the conclusion about the meaning of art? Ah, art schmart, who cares?

Mike Ventrella

Walt Disney and Assorted Other Characters

By Jack Kinney; Harmony Books; \$17.95

Jack Kinney's most notable contribution to the art of animation during his long career was the series of Goofy "how-to" cartoons he directed during the 1940s: hard-edged and unsentimental, they are among the most purely funny of all Disney cartoons.

His memoirs of his life in the animation business have a lot in common with those shorts. This is not one of those books that waxes poetical about Disney's place in the pantheon of artistic expression. Rather, it covers the day-to-day activities of animation: the hard work and lunch breaks and practical jokes, a side of the business that, except for certain portions of Shamus Culhane's *Talking Animals and Other People*, has remained largely unchronicled.

Kinney's portrayal of the title "character" is harsh; he doesn't doubt Disney's genius, but Walt doesn't come off as

Walt Disney's brother Ray. From Walt Disney and Assorted Other Characters. Copyright (c) 1989 Jack Kinney.



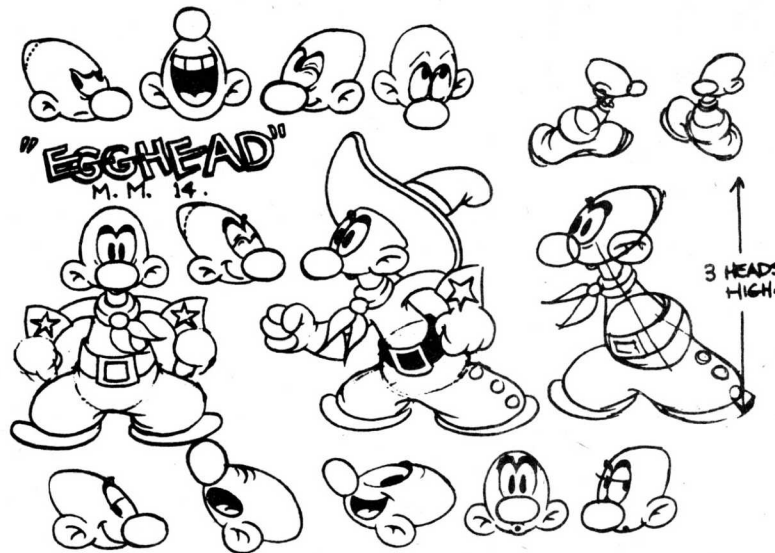
very likable or even entirely wise about his business. For example, Kinney attacks the institution of the "Nine Old Men" as being an insult to the talented Disney artists who weren't among the favored few.

But most of the book is just light-hearted and funny, including anecdotes about figures such as Norm Ferguson, Earl Hurd, Bert Gillett, Kinney's brother Dick, and, above all others except Disney himself, Roy Williams. And you are unlikely to find an analysis of Walt Disney's softball-playing style (which

was unskilled but very aggressive) in any other book.

Oh yes, there are the illustrations Kinney has drawn for the book. They are here in abundance, splashed over almost every spread, and are at least as delightful as the text. These loose, sometimes-bawdy drawings are reminiscent of the gag sketches pinned up around Disney (and every other animation studio known to man); they do a better job of accompanying the stories than photographs could ever do.

Harry McCracken



TERMITE TERRACE

(Continued from page 17)

I have my theories. First of all, Disney's courting of the art world inspired even his earliest critics to judge him on whether or not he was successful on that basis.

Realizing that if you can't climb Disney's pedestal, you can at least try to knock him down off it, the WB crew adopted a sensibility too lowbrow for the elitist Disney: namely, parody. Jules Feiffer once referred to comic art as "the drunk at the wedding [who] can get away with doing or saying anything, because, by its very appearance, it is already in disgrace. It has no one's respect to lose; no image to endanger." Lacking the budgets and resources to experiment as leisurely as Disney could, the WB gang went reactionary, going for the big laugh, and soon became the most popular attractions in the theaters...while Disney continued to collect the Oscars.

Another reason may be the WB shorts' legacy of burning themselves out through twenty-eight years of continued showing on Saturday morning, a phenomenon that Mickey Mouse chose to snub. When the Silly Symphonies debuted on video in 1981, they were treated like precious objects on exhibit at a museum for the first time in decades. But the practice of allowing the American TV audience continued access to Bugs and Company may have in the long term worked out in their favor. The kids of the 1960s who grew up with Bugs on Saturday morning are the thirty-something, video-buying adults of the 1980s, for whom Bugs strikes a nostalgic chord that Mickey

never had the opportunity to cultivate.

The Whitney Museum undoubtedly chose Disney as its patron saint of animation so it could exhibit an entire studio's work, yet still exhibit the art of one man. The work produced in Disney's studio was tailored to his order. But what would an exhibit of WB artwork be about? Tex Avery and his breaking down of the fourth wall? The uninhibited insanity of Bob Clampett? The vaudeville of Freleng and McKimson? The psychology of Chuck Jones? The varying philosophies of the WB studio may have proven more difficult to untangle than Disney's autocracy, but looked at collectively, they seem to be proponents of Rudolph Arnheim's tenet that "the very properties that make film fall short of perfect reproduction can act as the necessary molds of an artistic medium."

Disney animator Marc Davis has called animation "an anachronism; a hand-made product in a mechanized age." This statement is only partially true. Animation, heavily dependent on the use of technological equipment, is most definitely a product of the modern age. And if Arnheim is correct, the animator is most successful when both his subject matter and the style employed to convey it are of the sort that animation can express better than any other medium. Tex Avery's radical use of pose-to-pose animation in order to emphasize the extremes, Clampett's exaggeration of the movement between extremes, and the lean design of the later Jones shorts represent to Arnheim advocates a more pure use of the medium's possibilities than does creating the "illusion of life."

As far as subject matter goes, many of our most gifted writers describe phenomena inherent to the twentieth century that the Warner artists were depicting twenty to thirty years earlier. Susan Sontag, in *Illness as Metaphor*, wrote that, "In the Twentieth Century, the repellent, harrowing disease that is made the index of a superior sensitivity, the vehicle of 'spiritual' feeling and 'critical' discontent, is insanity." And Wile E. Coyote may well be the embodiment of what Marshall McLuhan in *Understanding Media* termed "the gadget lover," the modern Narcissus who sees himself in the gadgets he creates.

As we wade through the debris of the second half of the twentieth century, we see that animation is the worst adherent to the "Post-Modern" ethic (and Tex Avery is at the helm). Unlike all the other art media, including live-action cinema, animation in its latest phase is still referring to its own history more than anything else. *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*, *Family Dog*, *Mighty Mouse: the New Adventures*, and *Tattertown* all have joined forces to successfully replace the age-old question "Is animation art?" with a new one: "Is it art, or is it art history?"

There is another distinct difference between animation and the other art forms. If one is a student of the fine arts, he can go by a system which I call "take it or leave it." This simply means that there is so much reading material on so many art movements that he is free to pick and choose the period that most interests him. On the other hand, if one is studying the art of animation, particularly its history, he must go by the system of "take it where you can get it."

Always a believer that one should follow one's own advice, I will do just that, and ask no further why Schneider's book took so long, or why it isn't something else. *That's All Folks* serves to point out that there are still many aspects of the WB cartoons that have yet to be written about. Nevertheless, his is a handsome and loving tribute that will appease many fans who didn't really need to be convinced of the WB directors' standing as artists. And if the hoopla from this book ever subsides, W.W. Norton may just let us have a look at Chuck Jones's autobiography yet.

[Editors' note: Chuck Jones's book is now scheduled to be published by Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux in September.]

ANIMATO FILM POLL

As you can see, we've squeezed a lot of the results of our ongoing poll of your favorites into the little space we have for them this issue. We figured you'd like to see as much of each category as possible, and so we put everything in teeny-tiny type and removed director credits.

We invite each of you to cast your ballots in all five of our categories. Voting is easy; you don't even need to register, provide proof of residence or citizenship, or declare a party preference. Just send your lists to us at Animato Film Poll, PO Box 1240, Cambridge, MA 02140.

FEATURE FILMS

1. *Fantasia*
2. *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*
3. *Yellow Submarine*
4. *The Secret of NIMH*
5. *Pinocchio*
6. *Bambi*
7. *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*
8. *Watership Down*
9. *Dumbo*
10. *101 Dalmations*
11. *Allegro Non Troppo*
12. *Wizards*
13. *Rock & Rule*
14. *Peter Pan*
15. *Heavy Metal*
16. *Castle of Cagliostro*
17. *Laputa: Castle in the Sky*
18. *Lady and the Tramp*
19. *Tron*
20. *The Black Cauldron*
21. *Be Forever Yamato*
22. *Warriors of the Wind*
23. *The Last Unicorn*
24. *The Great Mouse Detective*
25. *Raggedy Ann and Andy*
26. *Phoenix 2772*
27. *The Jungle Book*
28. *The Hobbit*
29. *Song Of the South*
30. *Three Caballeros*
31. *Galaxy Express 999*
32. *Cinderella*
33. *Lord of the Rings*
34. *The Rescuers*
35. *Robin Hood*
36. *Plague Dogs*
37. *Terra Hei*
38. *An American Tail*
39. *A Boy Named Charlie Brown*
40. *Fire and Ice*
41. *The Land Before Time*
42. *Urusei Yatsura: Only You*
43. *Gay Purr-ee*
44. *The Brave Little Toaster*
45. *The Fox and the Hound*
46. *Grendel Grendel Grendel*
47. *Return of the King*
48. *Lensman*
49. *Fritz the Cat*
50. *Fun and Fancy Free*

TELEVISION SERIES

1. *The Bullwinkle Show/Rocky & His Friends*
2. *Dangermouse*
3. *Mighty Mouse: the New Adventures*
4. *Jonny Quest*
5. *DuckTales*
6. *The Jetsons*
7. *The Flintstones*
8. *Beany and Cecil*
9. *Star Trek*
10. *Lupin III*
11. *George of the Jungle*
12. *Starblazers*
13. *Top Cat*
14. *Adventures of the Gummi Bears*
15. *Real Ghostbusters*
16. *Astro Boy*
17. *Dirty Pair*
18. *Dungeons and Dragons*
19. *Count Duckula*
20. *ALF*
21. *Robotech*
22. *Kimba the White Lion*
23. *Speed Racer*
24. *Yogi Bear*
25. *Space Ghost*
26. *Tom Terrific*
27. *Wally Gator*
28. *Hoppity Hooper*
29. *Mighty Orbots*
30. *Inspector Gadget*
31. *Maple Town*
32. *Dynomutt*
33. *Misadventures of Ed Grimley*
34. *New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh*
35. *Good Morning Spank*
36. *New Adventures of Flash Gordon*
37. *G. I. Joe*
38. *Galaxy High*
39. *Fantastic Four*
40. *Orguss*
41. *New Adventures of Beany and Cecil*
42. *Huckleberry Hound*
43. *Eighth Man*
44. *Famous Detective Holmes*
45. *Muppet Babies*

THEATRICAL SHORTS

1. *Duck Amuck*
2. *Little Rural Riding Hood*
3. *One Froggy Evening*
4. *The Band Concert*
5. *What's Opera, Doc?*
6. *Duck Rabbit Duck*
7. *Popeye Meets Sinbad the Sailor*
8. *Duck Dodgers in the 24 and 1/2 Century*
9. *The Dover Boys*
10. *The Old Mill*
11. *Coal Black and De Sebben Dwarfs*
12. *Bimbo's Initiation*
13. *Snow White*
14. *The Great Piggy Bank Robbery*
15. *Book Revue*
16. *Bad Luck Blackie*
17. *Popeye Meets Ali Baba's 40 Thieves*
18. *Rabbit of Seville*
19. *Mechanical Monsters*
20. *Robin Hood Daffy*
21. *Minnie the Moocher*
22. *The Skeleton Dance*
23. *The Cat Who Hated People*
24. *King Size Canary*
25. *Mickey's Trailer*
26. *Cookie Carnival*
27. *Superman*
28. *Kitty Kornered*
29. *Dizzy Red Riding Hood*
30. *I Love to Singa*
31. *Aladdin's Lamp*
32. *Lucky Ducky*
33. *Der Fuhrer's Face*
34. *Trick or Treat*
35. *Apple Andy*
36. *A Wild Hare*
37. *The Mad Doctor*
38. *Three Little Pups*
39. *Lonesome Ghosts*
40. *Solid Serenade*
41. *Scrappy's Television*
42. *Russian Rhapsody*
43. *Thru the Mirror*
44. *Wabbit Twouble*
45. *Screwy Truant*
46. *Case of the Screaming Bishop*

TELEVISION SPECIALS

1. *How The Grinch Stole Christmas*
2. *Family Dog*
3. *A Christmas Carol*
4. *A Charlie Brown Christmas*
5. *A Doonesbury Special*
6. *A Claymation Christmas*
7. *A Pogo Special Birthday Special*
8. *It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown*
9. *Banjo the Woodpile Cat*
10. *Mr. Magoo's Christmas Carol*
11. *A Ziggy Christmas*
12. *Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer*
13. *Sport Goofy in Soccermania*
14. *Rikki Tikki Tavi*
15. *Here Comes Peter Cottontail*
16. *Carnival of the Animals*
17. *A Cosmic Christmas*
18. *Flashbeagle*
19. *Here Comes Garfield*
20. *Cathy*

INDEPENDENT SHORTS

1. *The Wizard of Speed and Time*
2. *The Great Cognito*
3. *Animato*
4. *Futuropolis*
5. *Bambi Meets Godzilla*
6. *Quasi at the Quackadero*
7. *Luxo, Jr.*
8. *Closed Mondays*
9. *Tango*
10. *Vincent*
11. *The Collector*
12. *Opera*
13. *Anna and Bella*
14. *Make Me Psychic*
15. *Oil Spot & Lipstick*
16. *The Big Snit*
17. *The Critic*
18. *Broken Down Film*
19. *Furies*
20. *Sunbeam*
21. *Sundae in New York*
22. *The Street*
23. *Elbowing*
24. *Interview*
25. *Flying Fur*
26. *The Fly*
27. *Jimmy the C*
28. *Rapid Eye Movements*
29. *Ubu*
30. *Frank Film*
31. *Jumping*
32. *Van Kant Danz*
33. *Seaside Woman*



A LITTLE BIRDIE TOLD ME

A GOSSIP COLUMN BY THELMA SCUMM

Hello, drearies, time for another episode with your favorite gossip monger...me!

I assume everyone here saw the dreadfully boring Academy Awards show this year, no? The embarrassing Snow White character singing one of those stupid Las Vegas-style songs at the beginning made me run out of the room screaming. It seems that it had a similar affect on the Disney executives, who promptly sued for copyright infringement. It took a few weeks, but eventually the Academy apologized, and Disney dropped the suit. I would say that the Disney guys have no sense of humor, but honestly, that opening was nausea-inducing. Disney did us a favor this time.

Speaking of Disney, I'm sure you noticed that *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* won three of the four awards it was nominated for that night. (No, it wasn't up for Best Picture.) It carried away awards for Best Film Editing, Best Visual Effects, and Best Sound Effects Editing. It lost Best Sound to *Bird*. Hey, not bad - *Rain Man* only won four awards! A special award was also given to Richard Williams, who didn't mention me in his thanks! I say! The award was presented by Robin Williams (any relation to Dick?) doing his Popeye imitation, and Charles Flesicher doing Roger Rabbit.

Oh, I almost forgot...In case you haven't heard, Disney is going all out to produce some Maroon Toons. Yes, it's true! They're spending almost \$2 million on the first little eight-minute Roger Rabbit film that is scheduled to premiere this summer, attached to the Touchstone film *Honey, I Shrunk the Kids*. The cartoon's title? *Rollercoaster Rabbit*.

Congratulations are in order for Sally (*Face Like a Frog*) Cruikshank, who is expecting a little baby animator any day now. (Please, Sally, just don't name him or her "Quasi," huh?)

Remember last issue, when I jokingly suggested that other studios would soon be doing shows about cartoon characters

at different stages in their lives? Well it seems that Kathleen Helppie, Vice President of Making A Lot Of Money over at Warner Brothers, has decided that nothing is sacred. Get ready for *Tiny Tunes*, featuring infantized versions of Bugs, Elmer, and all the rest of the WB gang. (Actually, the show is said to be about the offspring (nephews? nieces?) of the Looney Tunes crew.) The show will be syndicated, ready to air five times a day. Don't look for it until the fall of 1990, though. Ready for the worst of it? It's being produced by none other than Steven Spielberg, the man many people think is responsible for Don Bluth's recent bad films.

Disney, whose incredibly-successful *DuckTales* no doubt prompted WB to think up *Tiny Tunes*, is working up more syndicated animation, too. In fact, they're putting together a two-hour block for weekday afternoons that will feature *Tales*, *Chip N' Dale's Rescue Rangers*, new episodes of *The Gummi Bears*, and *Tale Spin*. What's *Tale Spin*? Imagine *DuckTales*, only starring *The Jungle Book*'s Baloo as a daredevil pilot. (The Disney folks say that at more than \$30 million for sixty-five episodes, it's the most expensive syndicated cartoon series ever.)

Hmmm. I wonder what Disney character will be the next to be enlisted to star in a syndicated adventure-comedy series? Snow White? Ranger Woodlore? Maybe Clarabelle Cow?

Meanwhile, Nelvana will be producing a *Beetlejuice* Saturday morning cartoon show for this fall!

Ralph Bakshi has begun his live-action film. "It's about how America changed from the '50s to the '80s...how honesty and ethics have been replaced by shopping centers and greed." You tell it, Ralphie boy. Gee, life sure was better back in the 50s - unless, of course, you were black, a woman, or accused of being a Communist sympathizer. Oh, well, as long as he stops making *Tattertown*, I'll be happy. (But I do hope more *Mighty Mouse: the New Adven-*

tures episodes are planned for next year! I hope everyone by now has seen "Don't Touch that Dial!", probably the best made-for-TV cartoon ever, in which Mighty gets himself stuck in various other thinly-disguised Saturday morning programs.)

Other Ralph news: He is said to be slated to direct a special based on *The Butter Battle Book* by Dr. Seuss, with Chuck Jones serving as consultant; He is working on other *Tattertown* specials; He is developing an NBC prime-time animated show called *Hound Town* about dogs. If you follow Bakshi news closely, you find that most of his announced projects never come to pass, so we'll wait out these until we get further info.

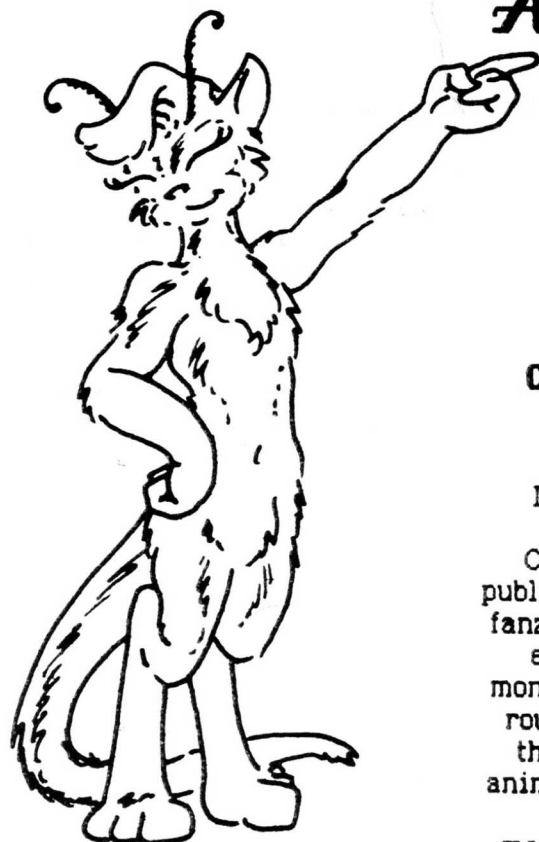
The news from Hanna-Barbera? Ted Turner is working with them now to develop a new cartoon series starring Tom and Jerry as (you guessed it) children! There is also talk about doing a Droopy show. Sigh.

They will be missed: T. Hee, writer and artist for Disney and Warner Brothers, and noted caricaturist; Dr. Osamu Tezuka, the Disney of Japan; Kenneth F. Champin, key member of Friz Freleng's animation unit at WB; George O'Hanlon, voice of George Jetson.

By the way, thank you to all of you people who have written to me to say how much you enjoy my column and *Animato*! It seems that the most common comment is, "Gee, you guys always tell it like it is! You don't just love everything and recycle press releases like some other magazines I could name!" Thanks, folks. We feel that we serve our function well here. (And also, thanks for being patient with us when your issue is late. We don't belong to any big animation firm, publishing house, or anything else, and working on *Animato* is not our full time job!)

So, in conclusion, just keep those cards, letters, and marriage proposals coming and remember...TURN OUT THAT LIGHT!

Attention Anime Fans!



Is the world of Japanese animation and manga passing by too quickly for you to keep up?

Would you like to be able to get in contact with other anime and manga fans throughout the world?

If so, America's oldest independent, non-profit fan club for Japanese Animation and Manga, the Cartoon/Fantasy Organization (founded in 1977), wants you as a member. We publish an annual membership directory, and an optional monthly fanzine (Regular and Full members of the C/F/O receive the three extra-large "club editions", which are published every four months, as part of their memberships). The C/F/O sponsors apas, round robins, chapters, affiliates, and other fannish activities that you can participate in even if you do not live near other anime and manga fans! As little as two dollars gets you listed in the annual C/F/O Membership Directory, while actual memberships in the C/F/O start at only \$4.00 a year (1989 dues)!

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Celluloid Diversions, the C/F/O's monthly animation and manga fanzine is now in its fourth year of regular monthly publication (compare that record to some of the "pro" American anime and manga magazines). It is a digest-sized fanzine (30-40 pages per normal issue) that prints information on Japanese anime series (recent articles have covered Saint Seiya, Samurai Troopers, Rose of Versailles, and Srungle), manga, the activities of C/F/O chapters and affiliates, and even fan fiction and translations! While Celluloid Diversions is available to non-members (for \$36 per year), C/F/O members can obtain their copies for as little as \$20 a year!

If you are an active anime or manga fan (or would like to be), you owe it to yourself to join the C/F/O. For more information, send for the C/F/O General Information Flyer, it has lots of information on the C/F/O and anime fandom in general. To get your copy and a C/F/O membership application, send a large Self Addressed Stamped Envelope (45 cents postage) to the following address:

**Cartoon/Fantasy Organization
Department MZ
P.O. Box 18261
San Antonio, TX 78218-0261**

ANIMATO HAS A FEW ISSUES TO DISCUSS WITH YOU.

Our back issues, that is. We've been publishing the magazine for more than five years, and classic *Animato* issues offer a wealth of coverage of 80s animation, historical articles, informative reviews, and other great features.

Issues #1-6, #11, #13, and #15 are out of print, but the following issues are still available, at \$2.50 each, or any five for \$10.00 - you save \$2.50. Many of the remaining issues are in short supply, so get 'em while they last. Here's a look at some of the highlights of these jam-packed magazines (each issue contains additional features):

#7: Disney's *The Black Cauldron* is cover-featured, with a look at its making and a review; G. Michael Dobbs interviews animation's elder statesman, Grim Natwick; Matt Hasson on Richard Williams's much-delayed, frequently-retitled, still-upcoming feature; and Jim Korkis on the Walter Lantz studio.

#8: We celebrate Porky Pig's fiftieth birthday with Matthew Hasson's look at his long film career; Jim Korkis on Bob

Clampett; Tim Fay on Japan's cult series *Urusei Yatsura*; plus Saturday Mourning '85, and G. Michael Dobbs on collecting Fleischer videotapes.

#9: Will Vinton's *Mark Twain* is our cover boy, with Harry McCracken's overview of Vinton's career inside; G. Michael Dobbs interviews Shamus Culhane; children's TV expert George W. Woolery on the history of TV animation; plus Korkis on Chuck Jones and featured reviews of *Starchaser* and the *19th Tournee of Animation*.

#10: Dave Bennett's cover announces a special book review section, with pieces on Leonard Mosley's *Disney's World*, Shamus Culhane's *Talking Animals and Other People*, and Joe Adamson's *The Walter Lantz Story*; Steve Segal begins his first-hand account of the making of *The Brave Little Toaster*; and Mark Marderosian on *Goliath II*.

#12: Timothy Fay presides over Saturday Mourning '86; Harry McCracken on *An American Tail* and Don Bluth's other work; Mike Dobbs on

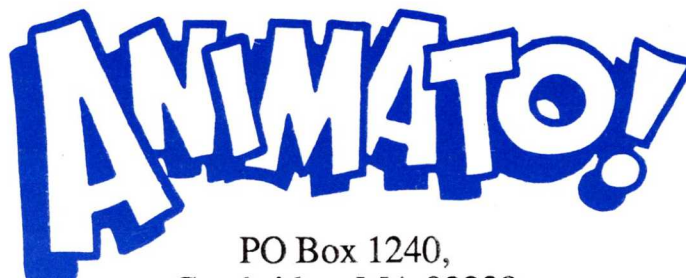
Max Fleischer's live-action work; Jim Korkis's *Harlequin* and David Bastian's *Flipbooks* columns debut; all topped off by a Dave Bennett cover.

#14: We mark the year of *Snow White* with Mike Ventrella's review of the film; Gary Meyer on Norman McLaren; TV's *Ewoks* and *Droids*; plus Shamus Culhane and a look at the future of computer animation.

#16: Our last digest-sized issue is a special *Mighty Mouse: the New Adventures* one, with a John Kricfalusi interview and RoundTable discussion of the show featuring comments by Chuck Jones, Leonard Maltin, and others. Plus McCracken on the Museum of Cartoon Art's Fleischer Studios exhibit, and more. Original cover by Kricfalusi.

#17: Our first magazine-sized issue features an exclusive Ralph Bakshi interview and preview of *Tattertown*; a look at the world of Chinese animation; an interview with Jack Hannah by Jim Korkis; and a long review of *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*.

Subscriptions to future issues are also available, of course: \$10.00 (\$15.00 outside of North America) gets you the next four issues hot off the presses, before they reach stores.



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